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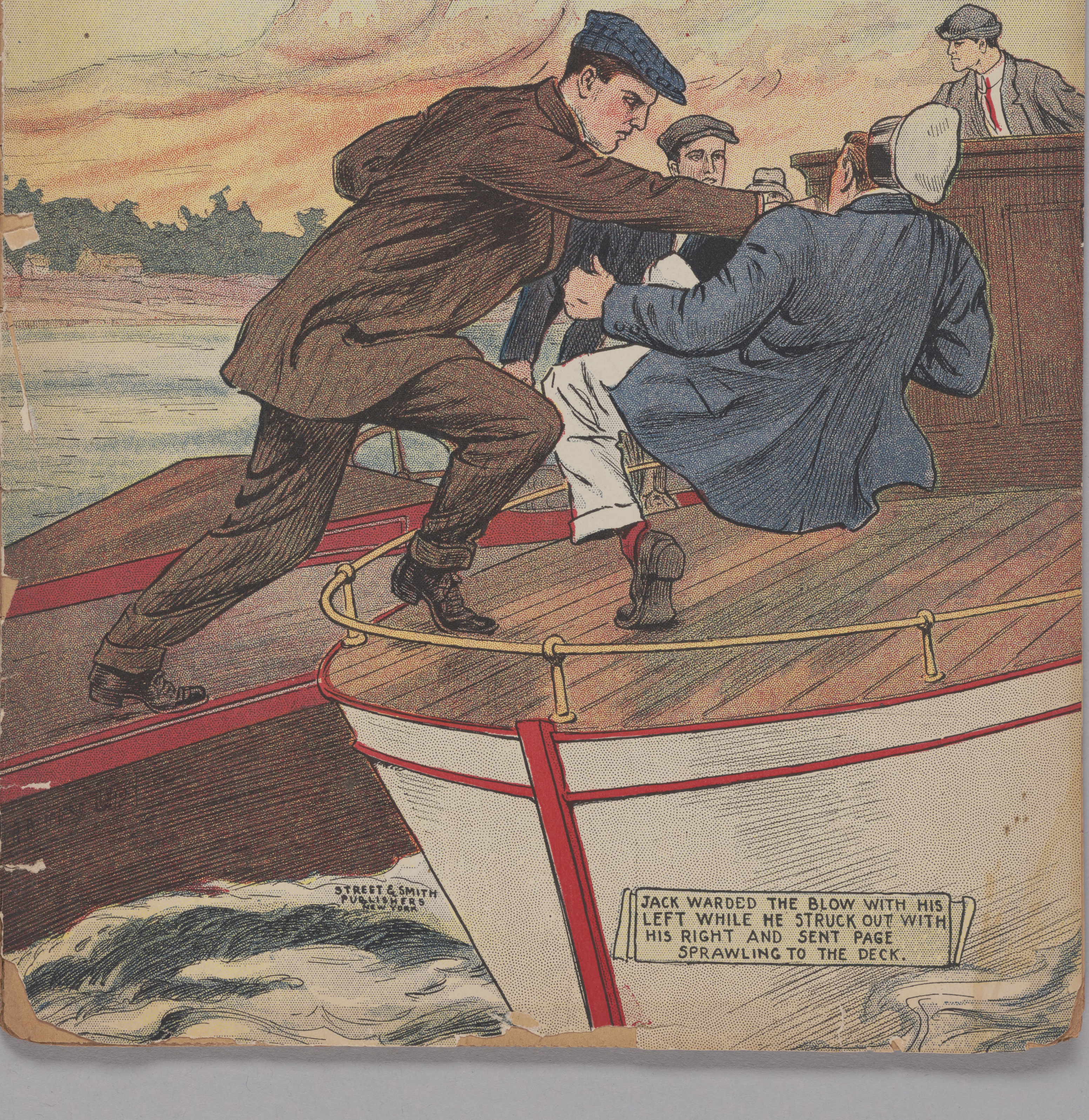
NEW NICK CARTER WEEKLY

REG. U.S. PAT OFF

JACK WISE'S HURRY CALL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JACK WARDED THE BLOW WITH HIS LEFT WHILE HE STRUCK OUT WITH HIS RIGHT AND SENT PAGE SPRAWLING TO THE DECK.

NEW NICK CARTER WEEKLY

REG. U. S. PAT. OFF.

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JACK WISE'S HURRY CALL;

Or, NICK CARTER'S YOUNGEST ASSISTANT GETS BUSY.

Edited by CHICKERING CARTER.

CHAPTER I.

A SUMMONS BY TELEPHONE.

Jack Wise, Nick Carter's newest and youngest assistant, bounded from his chair and seized the telephone.

"Hello, hello!" he said, through the transmitter, with the receiver at his ear.

"Oh, Jack! Jack! I'm so glad you answered. Come quickly, Jack! Connie and I are——"

Jack then heard a scream such as only a badly frightened girl can utter, then sounds of a brief struggle, muffled cries, a benumbed crash like the overturning of a table laden with books—and the sharp click of the instrument as it was shut off.

But the voice he had heard had been Mabel Vaughan's voice; the scream had come from her; the struggle, the crash, and the confusion of noises had come from the room where she had attempted to talk to him over the telephone.

Jack was alone.

Nick Carter had left the city that morning to be absent a week or more, and had taken Chick and Patsy with him.

But Jack Wise, in the stress of the moment, forgot that he was a newly fledged detective, forgot even that he was Nick Carter's third assistant.

He had heard the voice of the girl he loved, calling to him in terror over the telephone wires, and, knowing every inflection of her voice, he understood that she was in danger.

Controlling himself admirably under the circumstances, Jack began to move the hook of his own receiver up and down until the voice of the operator responded.

"Operator," he said, striving to speak calmly. "I must know where that call came from—the one that had this number just now. Be quick! I am speaking for Mr. Carter."

"Hold the wire," the operator replied.

Jack waited.

The minutes seemed like hours to him, and never had a faint "hello" sounded so welcome as that operator's when at last she gave it.

"Yes?" he replied eagerly.

"The call you asked about came from three-two-three-one Morgan. Do you know what it is, or shall I——"

"I know. Thank you. Good-by."

Jack bounced out of the room and down the stairs, seizing his cap as he went, and calling to Joseph as he passed him in the lower hall:

"I'm off for Wiseacres, Joseph. Something has happened—I don't know what."

He was outside of the house, down the steps, and had leaped into the driving seat of his high-powered roadster which was standing at the door, all in a flash, and another moment saw him tearing up the avenue at a speed which threatened arrest at every corner he passed.

He was conscious of just four things as he sped onward: The voice over the wire was Mabel's; the call had come from Wiseacres, which was his own home, and was located miles in the country, although it really was within the city limits; Mabel and Connie were in imminent danger; and he must get to them quickly.

The time was shortly after nine o'clock in the evening.

He made the journey safely, and he shut off the power and leaped to the ground before the door at Wiseacres within an incredibly short time after leaving Nick's house.

He dashed up the steps and used his own key upon the latch of the great front door. He rushed inside—and came to a dead stop.

Pierce, the butler at Wiseacres, was seated in a chair he delighted to occupy when he could do so, and was soundly asleep, and snoring.

Jack shook him roughly. Pierce slept on.

Jack then slapped the butler's face and called to him. Pierce did not move.

"Drugged!" Jack exclaimed, and left him. He was amazed.

He ran up the stairs to the floor above, and into Connie's room.

The month he had been with Nick Carter had already taught Jack much; his natural abilities had been splendid ground to build upon. Jack Wise was a natural-born detective in all his instincts and impulses.

He absorbed the condition of the room in a glance.

A chair that had always stood against the wall beside the telephone had been overturned, and the telephone directory was on the floor, where it had fallen from the chair.

A small table at the opposite side of the instrument which had contained an electric drop light, had also been overturned. The globe of the lamp had been smashed, but the bulb was intact, and the light was still burning—as were also two of the side lights, and two more in the chandelier.

From the table in the middle of the room the embroidered silken cover had been pulled off, and with it had come books, trays, and ornaments.

The room was a large one, and occupied the southwest corner of the mansion. It contained four windows. The bed stood with its head toward the south between two of the windows, and it showed quite plainly that somebody had been lying on it, for one of the pillow covers had been thrust aside, and the pillow was dented; also the faint outlines of a human figure could be seen upon the bed.

Jack stood still for an instant and called aloud to Connie and to Mabel. No reply. He pulled open closet doors, looked inside, found nothing that should not have been there.

He dashed out of the room and into others, finding nothing.

Then he darted down the stairs again, with something very much like terror gripping at his heart.

CHAPTER II.

AN EVENING OF MYSTERY.

Pierce, the butler, still slept, but Jack paused long enough to shake him again—without result.

He ran into the library. The shaded, electric lamp was burning upon the great table, a log fire glowed in the fireplace, for it was autumn, and the evenings were chilly.

The morning room was lighted, and he ran from there into the dining room. There, Pierce's assistant was sprawling upon a chair, as soundly asleep as was his chief in the hall.

The dinner that had been served on the table was still there, scarcely disturbed; and yet two persons had partaken of it. Two places were set, two chairs had been occupied, two places had been used, two napkins had been thrown upon the table after using.

Those two persons could have been only Mabel Vaughan and Constance Mills, the latter his cousin.

What had become of them?

What had induced them to throw down their napkins and leave the table before the entrée was half finished?

What had called them away so suddenly, and quite evidently, to Connie's room?

And what had become of them?

There was a freshly uncorked bottle of Burgundy upon the table, from which a small quantity had been decantered. Two glasses had been filled from it, and one of the glasses had been nearly emptied—the one which stood beside Constance's plate; the other one had scarcely been touched.

Jack dashed into the butler's pantry. The second waiter was there, also in collapse upon a chair, and snoring.

Jack Wise was really frightened.

He ran into the housekeeper's room, which was located in an extension at the rear, and there he discovered Mrs. Seymour.

She was seated in an armchair, which had been drawn up to the table upon which her dinner things were set.

Mrs. Seymour was also asleep and utterly unconscious. Her head had fallen forward until her chin rested against her ample bosom. She snored, too. There was no wine before her, for she never used it, Jack remembered; but there was her inevitable teacup. It was half full of tea, and the pot which contained the tea was beside it.

Jack tried, unsuccessfully, to rouse her.

Although she was large and heavy, he managed to get her from the chair to a couch, and he spent some time in working over her, unavailingly.

He left her after a little, and visited other parts of the house.

Down in the kitchen every servant there was soundly asleep. In the servants' dining room, the hostler, the groom, the coachman, one of the footmen, and two of the maidservants were asleep.

But everywhere lights were lighted, nothing had the appearance of being disturbed, there was no evidence of confusion.

Everything was as if the activities of the household had been held up on an instant—as if somebody had held up a hand in command, and everything had stopped.

Jack ran out of the house toward the stables. He stopped at the garage and looked in; then he went inside and peered around.

The chauffeur was not there, and the big, seven-passenger Crandyl was gone.

Jack used the telephone while he was in the garage, and called up Doctor Cameron, who lived a mile away.

"This is Jack Wise speaking, doctor. I am at Wiseacres," Jack said. "Something has happened here. I don't know yet what it is, but I want you to come here quickly. No, no, no! Not that, thank Heaven! Please don't wait for explanations now, but come! The whole household has been drugged into insensibility, and that is absolutely all I know—except one thing more, and I'll tell you that when you get here."

The one thing more was that Jack already knew that three persons were missing from Wiseacres: Mabel, Constance, and the maid who served Constance. They were missing, and Appleton, the chauffeur, was gone with the big car.

Still, the absence of Appleton did not greatly concern Jack just then. He did not, in fact, associate it with the disappearance of Mabel and Constance, and because he knew Appleton so well and trusted him so fully that he assumed at once that the chauffeur had been sent upon an errand with the big car, earlier in the evening.

And only a moment later he had sufficient proof of that assumption, for as he left the garage, Appleton drove under the porte-cochère at the front of the house, and six young women sprang out of the car.

Jack ran forward to greet them—and to keep them from entering the house.

He knew every one of them. They were all the daughters of men who had country homes in that neighborhood, and Jack knew, even before he was told, what had happened.

Connie had telephoned to Mabel to come to dinner with her. Cora Wise, the general's daughter, was away traveling in Europe, and Connie, her cousin, who had been like another daughter, sometimes got lonesome.

Mabel had responded, and the two, at meeting, had decided to send for some of their friends and to have a regular "girl evening."

So Appleton had been told to get out the big car and go after them—and, as it happened, he had been given his dinner earlier than the other servants, for that reason, and so had escaped the general drugging.

Jack bundled the six young women into the car again and sent them to their homes; nor did he acquaint them with the facts of what had happened.

He told them, with truth, that everybody in the house had been badly affected by something they had eaten or drank; but he assured them that there was no danger, and that he had sent for a doctor.

A short time after they had gone, Doctor Cameron arrived.

One by one the people in the house who had been drugged were brought to their senses, but they might just as well have remained insensible for all that anybody could tell, or even surmise, of what had happened.

The doctor's investigation proved that very nearly everything that had gone upon the three tables had been drugged—the tea, the coffee, the wine, much of the food, particularly the soup.

Pierce, the butler, should really have escaped the general drugging, but he confessed to having felt not exactly well, and to having taken a quiet nip just before the dinner hour. That was why he had not waited upon the young ladies at table, in person.

Nothing—apparently—had been stolen.

CHAPTER III.

AN UNEXPLAINED CIRCUMSTANCE.

The dream of Jack Wise had come true.

Ever since he had been with Nick Carter he had longed for a case that would be all his own and which he would have to handle entirely upon his own responsibility.

He had it.

Nick Carter was away and he had taken his first and second assistants with him; and he would not return for more than a week, nor could he be interrupted in the matters that had called him away.

Jack rather regretted his "dream" and his wish, when he "faced the music" that night at Wiseacres, after the members of the household had been restored to consciousness, and Doctor Cameron had taken his departure.

Jack had succeeded in giving the doctor the impression that the young ladies were absent, and hence had escaped the general drugging; and the doctor, not being able to attribute any other reason to the circumstance, had put it down as an extremely crude joke which some dismissed or jealous servant had played upon the people at Wiseacres.

The butler's assistant did not remember when the young ladies left the dining room; evidently he had fallen into a stupor before they did so.

Pierce must have been already asleep when the girls passed through the hall and ascended the stairs—for it was certain that they had gone to Constance's room, because Jack was assured that it was from that room that Constance had called him up.

Mrs. Seymour had no knowledge whatever of what had happened until Jack told her, and called her into the library to consult with her and Pierce at the same time.

It appeared that Mabel had not been affected by the drug, if she had swallowed any of it.

Neither of the young ladies had partaken of the soup that night, and Mabel had evidently left her wine untouched; hence she had escaped. Constance had taken a portion of the wine served to her in her glass, and had fallen a victim to the drug.

Probably its first effect upon her had been a general illness, and Mabel had left the table with her and assisted her to her own room, where she had laid down upon the bed; and then——

That was where the blank came in. What then?

"It's a hoax of some sort, of course," Jack said to Pierce and Mrs. Seymour, in the library. "It does not seem possible to explain it in any other manner; and yet, it's a mighty serious kind of a joke to play."

"If I might make a suggestion, sir," said Pierce apologetically.

"Certainly. Go ahead, Pierce. This is no time for standing upon ceremony."

"Your suggestion, sir, falls in with my own views of the matter. It's rather presumptuous of me to say what I have in mind, sir, but nevertheless——" he hesitated.

"Go on, Pierce. Get it out of you."

"Well, sir, you and Miss Connie have been children here together, and you know what she is, with her mischievous ways. When the general, bless him! first brought you home here and adopted you as his own son, don't you remember how shy you were, and how Miss Connie used to make you cry, teasing you?"

"Oh, yes, I remember well enough. What are you driving at?"

"Ever since you went to live with Mr. Carter, sir, Miss Connie has teased you about it every time she has seen you. I have heard it, sir. Well, don't you think that it is quite possible that she and Miss Vaughan have fixed up this——"

"Stop right where you are, Pierce. That theory is quite impossible. She would not hesitate to play any kind of a joke on me, even to feeding me jalap—she did that once—but she is not the girl to have drugged you and Mrs. Seymour, and all the rest of them, in one of her pranks. No; it is out of the question. What is your opinion, Mrs. Seymour?"

"I have one, sir, but it is based upon nothing but my natural fears."

"What do you mean by that?"

"I cannot help thinking, Mr. Jack, that this affair is but another consequence of the two crimes that have already happened at Wiseacres and Vaunt-on."*

"What? You think that?"

"I do, sir."

"Why?"

"I can't tell you that. It is nothing more than an impression. It is now midnight, sir, of the twenty-fourth day of October, four months and eleven days since that man John Crooks murdered General Wise for no other reason than to make it appear that you did it, in order that Miss Mabel Vaughan might think ill of you. Wait sir, please; I have not finished."

"Go on."

"It is only one month and twelve days since Mabel's father was killed in the streets of New York by the brother of John Crooks; and it is altogether too soon even to think that Mabel Vaughan would be a party to any sort of a hoax, particularly to this kind."

"That is true."

"Well, Mr. Jack, I haven't any good reason, or any reason at all, to suppose that this affair has grown out of either or both of those crimes, but I cannot help the thought that it has done so. At least that is the only suggestion I have to make about it."

Jack was thoughtful.

Mrs. Seymour left her chair.

"If you will excuse me for a moment, I would like to go to Miss Connie's room," she said.

Jack nodded and she went away.

There was a long silence after that, which Pierce presently broke by a tentative cough, after which he suggested:

"If I might make a remark, sir, the maid who served Miss Connie has disappeared, too?"

"There isn't any doubt of that. What is in your mind in regard to that, Pierce?"

"The remarks of Mrs. Seymour have set me to thinking. The maid was a new one, you know. I doubt if you have seen her more than once or twice, sir."

"As a matter of fact I don't think I have seen this one, at all. What do you know about her, and what did Mrs. Seymour say that has set your wits to work?"

"The maid, sir, had been here with Miss Connie, three weeks to-day. She was not a trained ladies' maid, sir; not at all. I doubt if she had ever been at service before she came here; and her hands—well, they looked as if she had done hard work at some time not so very long ago; in a mill, or a factory, or something of that sort, sir. They were not the hands and fingers of a ladies' maid, sir."

"What has all that to do with the disappearances, Pierce?"

"I don't know, sir; I cannot even guess; but I think you might like to know all that I can tell you about her."

"I certainly would like to know it."

"What you have told us about the call to you on the telephone, and what Mrs. Seymour has said, and the fact that Miss Coots has disappeared with the two young ladies and was not a victim of the drug, leads me to think that she has had a hand in the whole affair, and that more than likely she directed it, and that she may have come here to act as maid for the very purpose of arranging it."

"Hold on, Pierce; you are going altogether too fast."

"I haven't told you *all* about her yet, sir."

"Go ahead, then."

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*See the two preceding issues of the NICK CARTER WEEKLY.

"Miss Spang, the regular maid who has been with Miss Connie so long, has not gone away for good, sir; she is only temporarily absent, and Miss Coots——"

"Coots, Coots, Coots; now where in the world have I heard that name before?" Jack interrupted. The name had for some reason struck a chord in his memory, but for the moment he could not trace it out. "Go on, Pierce," he added.

"Miss Coots applied here only three days before Miss Spang was to leave, and nobody had been secured for the place. Miss Connie had thought that she would do without a maid, and Mrs. Seymour thought she ought not. Miss Coots had only general recommendations as to character, and I don't think that they were ever looked into, sir. While I was talking to her, and was on the point of sending her away, Miss Connie came into the room. She liked the girl, and engaged her, seeming to take a delight in the idea that she was to teach her how to become a ladies' maid. That is all, sir."

"What sort of employment did the girl ask for, when she first appeared?"

"Any sort, sir. She was not particular. She was quite young to have a husband, but she said she had just lost one, but that she had been brought up as a Quaker, and didn't believe in mourning. She aroused the sympathies of Miss Connie, sir. And she wanted to be addressed as miss."

"No doubt. They were about the easiest things to rouse that I ever saw. Here is Mrs. Seymour back again. You look as if you had made some sort of a discovery, Mrs. Seymour. What is it?"

"Mr. Jack, nearly everything of Miss Constance's wardrobe is missing. They have taken everything—even much of her heavier clothing, as if they meant to be gone until cold weather sets in. All of her jewelry is gone. I know that she had quite a sum of money locked in a drawer in her room; that is gone, too—and two of her steamer trunks and two hand bags have disappeared. Do you think—do you suppose, sir, that it is possible—that they have *run* away?"

"Nonsense. Utter nonsense! Good Heaven, woman! what would either of them want to run away for, I'd like to know? Do you suppose that Mabel would run away from *me?*"

"No, sir, I don't."

"Well, then?"

"I was thinking, sir, that even though it is late at night, if you should drive over to Vaunt-on, to Miss Vaughan's home, they might be there. It is only a hope, Mr. Jack."

"It is blasted before it is uttered, Mrs. Seymour. One of the first things I did was to telephone to Jenkins, the butler, at Vaunt-on. I let him suppose that I was phoning from the city, and he told me that Mabel was spending the night with Connie."

"Are you not almost crazy, sir? I am."

"Crazy?" Jack jumped from his chair and strode twice across the room. "Don't suggest such a thing to me again. I've got to keep my head about me. Crazy! Good Lord! Connie is just the same as my own sister; and Mabel—you know what she is to me, Mrs. Seymour. But I've got to hold myself in. I've got to keep cool. I've got to think, and reason, and search, and plan. I've got to try to do exactly as Nick Carter would do if he were here. Crazy! If I should let go of myself, I'd tear the stars down out of the sky. That is the way I feel about it."

"My poor boy!" said Mrs. Seymour sympathetically.

"And I've got to make up my mind between now and daylight, where to look for them. I can't do anything until it is light, except to use every minute of the time till then in deciding what will be the best course to pursue."

CHAPTER IV.

THE SNAKE BOX.

"Coots! Coots! Coots!" Jack kept repeating to himself as he slowly ascended the stairs toward Connie's room, leaving Mrs. Seymour and Pierce to continue their discussion of the affair in the library.

The sound of the name had impressed him as not entirely unfamiliar. He believed that he had heard it somewhere before. He believed that he had not heard it used more than once, or perhaps twice at the most, and he was certain that the name had held some sort of interest for him when he had heard it.

He passed into Connie's room and stood still.

Right here it must be borne in mind that Jack Wise was better adapted for the investigation he was about to make—although he had not determined exactly what it would be—than any other person would have been. The reasons were manifold.

Constance Mills and he had been children, then boy and girl, and then youth and maiden together. They were distant cousins, but they had grown up together exactly like brother and sister, and with all the intimacy of that relation.

They had fought and quarreled and slapped each other's faces, and made up and kissed each other, and rolled tenpins in the halls, and thrown spitballs, and eaten stolen pies and cake and tarts, and played pranks in every room in the house and all over the place.

Jack did not suppose there could be a habit or a gesture or a trait of Constance, with which he was not entirely familiar; and so he stood ready to search that room, with the feeling that if anything was wrong about it, or if anything had been done there which was not according to the methods of Constance herself, he would discover it and understand it at once.

The house was his own home—literally so, now, since the death of the general nearly five months ago.

Mrs. Seymour had "put things to rights" while she had been in the room; that is, she had replaced things on the center table where the cover, with its contents, had been pulled to the floor; and she had picked up the overturned chair near the telephone and hung the directory back on its hook; she had also smoothed out the spread of the bed and replaced the pillow cover.

Jack now pulled open drawers to examine their contents. He wanted to discover what had not been taken away.

There were several small keepsakes which he took from one of the drawers, that were of no value at all, but which he knew that Connie loved because of their associations. He knew that if she had made any preparations herself for going away, there were many of them that she would not have left behind.

He smiled sadly when he lifted a small wooden box that he had once made himself, with a jackknife. The sight of it brought back many memories, and he smiled again when he recalled what he had last done to it, only a year or two before.

Little had he thought then—as little did he think at that moment—that the thing he had made as a boy, and joked about again only less than a year ago, was some day to be the means of helping him to solve a great mystery.

It was fashioned out of basswood and was the size and shape of a small prayer book, and had been intended to represent one. The inside of it had been hollowed out with a jackknife, and a sliding cover could be drawn out and in along the front of it, where the covers of a book shut together.

Inside the space that had been hollowed out, there was a wooden snake, painted green and with a fierce-looking black head and bead eyes; and in the place where the fangs should have been there was an imbedded pin—or rather there had once been one, until Jack had jokingly changed that part of its arrangement, less than a year ago.

The wooden snake was curved, and was attached to the sliding cover by a cord, so that when the lid was pulled out quickly, the snake would dart from its place of concealment, and the sharp point of the pin would be imbedded in the knuckle of the person who disturbed it.

Jack pulled the sliding cover out, warily, for he remembered the change he had made in it.

He had pulled the pin from the mouth of the snake, and had replaced it with the half of a hypodermic needle that he had picked up somewhere, and he had soaked the needle in some indelible ink before he did so—and Connie still wore the tiny, blue-black spot in one of her knuckles in memory of her first investigation after Jack had made the alterations.

She had put the snake box, as it was called, carefully away after that, saying that she would not permit anybody else to be marked up by it. It was not two weeks since Jack had seen her take it from that drawer to show him that it had a rubber band around it so that the snake could not bite.

But the rubber band now was gone.

He pulled the lid out very cautiously, but no wooden snake, red and angry and prepared to bite, appeared.

Then he looked inside the hole, and saw that the snake was there, in two pieces, and he turned the box upside down and let them fall out on the chiffonier.

His snakeship had been broken in half. More than that, there was the plain imprint of a boot heel upon it—just the rounded dent made by the edge of a heel that had been stamped upon it, perhaps in anger.

Jack was instantly interested.

There was not the slightest doubt that the mar upon the red snake was made by the heel of a moderately heavy shoe; there could not be any doubt that it had been made by a man's shoe, and not by the small heel of a woman; and there was no sort of idea that Connie would have permitted any such liberties to be taken with her snake box.

He picked up that part of the broken snake which contained the head, and from the same drawer in the chiffonier he took a tiny microscope that had been another plaything, and he held it over the point of the hypodermic needle which protruded a full quarter of an inch from the wooden head of the snake.

Once he had soaked that needle in indelible ink, so that the hollow of it as well as the point was filled full, and stained. The ink would dry, of course, but if you will some time take the trouble to coat a bit of polished steel with indelible ink and then lay it away, you will find that very long afterward the least bit of moisture applied to the steel will bring out a stain from the ink.

Jack had seen that proved in the case of this very needle, for had not Connie herself received a tiny stain on her white knuckles?

The moisture of the skin when the needle punctured it was sufficient.

He remembered, too, that he had used the same small microscope upon the needle at the time when Connie had pricked herself with it—to see if the ink had been rubbed away from the point of it; that was done jokingly at the time; now, the fact that it had been done at all had suddenly became a serious matter indeed.

Two things clung to the point of that needle when he applied the microscope to it, and it can readily be understood how tiny those two things were since they were clinging to the point of a broken hypodermic needle.

But the microscope showed them plainly enough, nevertheless. It was a strange thing indeed that two of the playthings that he and Connie had used in their childhood should have become so important all at once.

There was a very small speck of something that was undoubtedly blood upon the point of the needle; and, clinging to it, as if it were paste, was an infinitesimal particle of skin; and fastened to that tiny bit of skin was a hair, less than a sixteenth of an inch in length, and as fine as the web of a spider.

And the hair was black.

He dropped the broken snake back into the box and closed the lid and then put it, with the microscope, into his coat pocket.

CHAPTER V.

THE WOMAN IN THE CASE.

Jack Wise labored until daylight in going from room to room in the careful study of everything. Aided by his close intimacy with everything that concerned the two girls who had disappeared, he was enabled to read much that another, and even a more experienced person might not have noticed.

He questioned Appleton again, he talked further with Pierce and with Mrs. Seymour, and as soon as it was light in the morning he made a careful tour of the outside of the house. The result of his researches was as follows:

The drug that had been used, according to Doctor Cameron, was probably canibus indica; probably that because it would lend itself more readily to the uses to which this drug had been put, than any other one he knew about.

It might easily and readily be used in candy, in any edible, or in any drink, and was not likely to betray itself by the taste—at least not sufficiently to prevent its being swallowed.

The maid, who was known among the servants as Miss Coots, and who had been called by the name of Milly by Connie, was without doubt one of the conspirators against the two girls, if not the leading spirit of the whole affair. This was established by the absence of the articles of clothing belonging to Connie, that had been taken; and it was easy to see that sufficient had been taken to provide for Mabel as well as for Connie.

Some previous knowledge of the plans for that evening by Connie must have been in the possession of the plotters, else how could all of the arrangements have been so perfectly made and so thoroughly carried out? And who was so likely to possess such knowledge as the maid?

The preparation of the two trunks that had been taken away had been going on evidently for some time. Articles that Connie would not miss had been carried to the small room at the rear of the house where the trunks were kept, from time to time, for days, Jack thought, judging from the few forgotten or neglected articles he found to be still on the floor in that small room.

The maid would have known about Connie's plans for that evening, in sending for Mabel to pass the night with her, and in preparing for the reception of the other six girls.

Some person in the house must have attended to the introduction of the drug into the food and drink, et cetera—and who so available as that maid?

Canibus indica introduced in correct quantities will produce precisely the sort of deadly stupor in which Jack had discovered the servants, and once it begins to have its effect it is excedingly rapid upon a person who has never used it.

Conveyances of some sort must have been waiting outside, probably within the grounds, and they could have waited with patience, knowing that there would be little chance of being surprised by the return of Appleton, who had been sent away to call at six widely separated places, to collect six girls and take them to Wiseacres.

Then, again, Appleton had had trouble with the engine of his car—and the sort of trouble which he was not slow to insist had been caused by a meddlesome hand tampering with the car before it started; he was really more than an hour later in returning to Wiseacres than he otherwise would have been.

Mabel had gone to Connie's room with her, when Connie felt ill; she had administered to her friend, after assisting her to get upon the bed, dressed as she was.

By some means, then, she had discovered that some sort of deviltry was going on, and she had used the telephone in Connie's room to call up Nick Carter's house in the city.

But the consequence of it at that end was that she was caught in the act of telephoning for assistance, and had been overpowereed in the very act, had been dragged away from the telephone, had struggled so that the cover had been pulled away from the table in the room, and a chair had been overturned, also a smaller table with the light.

But she had been overpowered, and she had been carried away by force, with Connie; and those who had done the thing had been shrewd enough to hang up the receiver of the telephone as soon as it had dropped from her hand when she was attacked.

There was absolutely nothing to tell what the motive might have been; nothing to determine why both girls should have been carried off; nothing to show who or what condition of persons had assisted in the double abduction.

Not a person in the house had suspected that anything was wrong. One by one they had become insensible—and not one of them was left with wit enough to remember any of the others as falling into that condition first.

Jack had his breakfast prepared as soon as it was light in the morning, and he summoned Appleton to him and directed him to get the car ready, and to prepare to accompany him.

To Pierce and Mrs. Seymour, he said, as he was about to start away:

"Not a word of this must get out, at present. I shall go from here direct to Vaunt-on, where I shall inform Mabel's mother of what has happened. I doubt if she will be able to suggest anything that will help in the search, but there is always that possibility; and she must be made aware of the facts.

"Tell the other servants that the least word of this affair that is told outside the immediate household, will be the cause of instant dismissal. Let everything go on here as if nothing has happened.

"I cannot find anywhere, the suggestion of what the motive might have been for this double abduction. I am sure of only one thing, and that is that the maid, Coots, was the prime mover, if not the instigator of it all.

"Neither of you can tell me a thing about her more than you have already told, and there is not a line or a scrap of writing in the house to tell more. All that I have been able to find, is this," and he held out a roll of several sheets of paper, each bearing a rude beginning of a sketch of a young woman's head.

Not one of the sketches were anywhere near finished, but he knew them to be the work of Connie, and he surmised that they were sketches of the maid, Milly Coots.

"They are not very good, but they are intended for Miss Coots," Pierce assured him. Jack put them in his pocket.

"Coots! Coots! Coots!" Jack said to himself, again and again, as he drove his car to Vaunt-on. The name bothered him, he was so sure that he had heard it before. The name of Milly, too, had a partly familiar sound to him.

"Milly means Mildred, usually," he told himself, as he drove along with Appleton beside him. "That would be Mildred Coots. *Jove!*"

He remembered now where he had heard the name; it was no wonder that he had not recalled it before. He had heard it mentioned only once, but the mere recollection of the circumstances surrounding the time and place where it had been mentioned opened up a world of conjecture.

At all events it decided him instantly how to act.

"Tell me, Appleton," he said, "did you see much of Mildred Coots, who served Miss Connie as maid?"

"I saw mighty little of her, sir," was the reply. "She had brown hair and sky-blue eyes, which is not a usual combination, is it?"

"No. Go on. Tell me all that you noticed about her. Wait a moment, I'll tell you why I ask."

"Yes, sir."

"I have suddenly remembered when and where I heard the name before. I have thought all the time that I had heard it, and now it has come to me. I heard it in South Norwalk, when I went out there on the trail of Jules Lablanc, alias Dick Henry, the man who murdered Mr. Vaughan.* You remember, don't you, that he was a hatter, in South Norwalk once, and that I got track of him by that means?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, the mill girl he married in South Norwalk was named Mildred Coots. I never saw her but once, and then caught only a glimpse of her, and she wore a veil. Now go on."

CHAPTER VI.

A SCRAP FROM MABEL'S DIARY.

"She is very pretty, Mr. Jack, although it is rather a bold sort of prettiness, if I am any judge. I didn't see enough of her to know whether I liked her or not, but I'm inclined to think that I would not have liked her very much. I don't think I know how to describe her more than I have done."

"Do you know if anybody came to Wiseacres to see her while she was there?"

"I don't think anybody did; but she went to the city twice."

"How did she go?"

"I drove her over to the trolley in one of the cars; but she sat in behind both times and barely spoke to me at all. Most maids would have preferred to sit on the front seat beside the chauffeur, Mr. Jack."

"That's so."

"And, if it is worth anything to have me say it, I think she was the sort of girl who would have preferred that very sort of thing if she had not had something on her mind to make her forget to want to flirt."

"Oh. I see."

At Vaunt-on, Jack told the story of what had happened, to Mabel's mother; and he told it deftly and carefully.

"I want you to be very brave, and leave it all to me, Mrs. Vaughan," he said, in conclusion. "I think I am on the track already. It has all come to me while I have been driving the car over here from Wiseacres. Honestly, I think I can promise you that I will be able to find them before dark to-night."

Jack was not at all sure of that; in fact, he was very far, indeed, from believing it; but he thought it was the thing to say.

"But, Jack, *why* did they do it? What can they gain by it?" the mother demanded.

"Heaven only knows; I do not," he replied.

"A ransom?"

"Hardly that, I think."

"What then?"

"I haven't an idea as to the motive unless it is just plain revenge," he replied. "This Mildred Coots—that was her maiden name—was the girl that married Dick Henry, who was Lablanc, as you remember. When Mr. Carter and I went to South Norwalk after him, we found him just in the act of departing from the house where she had formerly lived. He had taken her there to hide, and he was starting away when we found him. This woman, his wife, was embracing her grandfather at the moment. I scarcely saw her. But I have some rough sketches of her that Connie has made—and I know her grandfather. I can find him again, and I can find her, too; and when I find her, I will have found Mabel and Connie."

"Was his name Coots, too?"

"No. That is why I could not place the name, when I heard it again. Her mother was a daughter of the old man's. His name is Borden. Now, never mind all that. I want you to let me go to Mabel's rooms for a few moments. I want to look around up there."

"Why?"

"Well, I think the plot of these people was against Mabel rather than Connie, and that Connie fell into it, so to speak. I don't know what I want to look for in Mabel's room—I just want to look, that's all."

"Go, Jack. Do as you please. You know that you can do that."

Where is the young girl who does not love to keep a diary? Some of them dignify it by the name of "journal." Others call it "thoughts." Jack knew that

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*See preceding issue Nick Carter Weekly: "The Gold Certificate."

Mabel owned such a book, and that she wrote in it religiously, at least once or twice each week—and he knew, also, that under ordinary circumstances he would not open the covers of such a sacred thing for all the world.

He knew, without having seen more than the outside of the covers of the sacred book, that a very large proportion of its contents referred to himself—for Mabel had often told him as much.

But he knew, too, that she was in the habit of jotting down almost everything that came into her daily life, and commenting upon each thing—and he realized that under the circumstances Mabel would forgive him for reading what was written there.

So it was that book that he wanted; nothing more nor less.

He knew where she kept it, too, for she had often told him that.

It was in her desk, which was kept locked, inside a drawer of that desk which was also locked, and the gold clasp of the book also held a lock which was worked by a small golden key—but he was resolved to break every one of those locks in order to reach the contents of that little book.

So he went to Mabel's room alone, and he went straight to the desk when he got there.

The lock upon it was an ordinary one, and one of the keys on his own ring easily fitted it. The key to the drawer inside the desk was missing, but he did not hesitate to pry the drawer open, breaking the lock in doing so, and to possess himself of the book. He put that under his coat and left the house, after bidding Mrs. Vaughan good-by.

"Did you find anything?" she asked.

"Not much. Her diary, that's all. I shall read that as I go toward South Norwalk."

"Her diary? Goodness! She will never forgive you, Jack."

"She will have to, Mrs. Vaughn, for I'm going to read it through—that is, I'm going to read as much of it as I think necessary."

Outside, as he leaped into the car, he said to Appleton:

"I want you to drive fast. How soon do you think you can make South Norwalk?"

"I can do it in less than two hours, I think."

"Do it in just as much less than that as you dare," was the order.

Jack became so absorbed in the reading of the diary of a young girl, that he almost forgot where he was and what his errand was, and many were the blushes that flushed his cheeks when he was reminded of what he was reading.

There were sacred things there which Mabel had not intended him to see, for they told so very plainly of her great love for him, of her pride in him, and about the little and the great things he had done, and meant to do.

What a hero he was, in her eyes, to be sure! He resolved then and there that he most certainly would strive with all his power to live up to her faith and hope in him—and so it was not a bad thing, after all, for him to read what he did.

But in all that he did read, there was only one entry which greatly interested him so far as his real search was concerned—and he had to read between the lines, aided by what he already knew, and by much that he now surmised, in order to be impressed by the significance of that.

This is the entry just as Mabel had written it. (Bear in mind that it was then the twenty-fifth day of October):

"October 19. This has been a beautiful day. So sunny and pleasant. Such a beautiful letter from Jack this morning. Isn't he a perfect dear! Connie's new maid came over this morning to ask me to meet Connie on the golf links at ten o'clock, and I went. We had a perfectly lovely time, too. I wish that Connie had somebody to love the way I love Jack. What a perfectly sweet thing she is! But I started to say something about Milly—that is the new maid's name. She is a strange kind of a girl. I don't think I quite like her. She seems bold, and she talks too much about men. I don't like that. She has been married, too, she says, since three years ago, and her husband deserted her, and then came back to her, and she took up with him. (I don't think that I would do that, if a man deserted me.) And then he committed some sort of a crime, at least that is the idea I get from what she said. He is in prison now. She says he got into a fight—and once she spoke about him as Dick. I don't know why I permitted a maid to talk so intimately with me. I should not have done it. But she seemed to want sympathy, and she said she liked me, and she asked me if I couldn't help her to get a position for a friend of hers. I told her that I would try. All the same, I do not think I will do it, for I don't quite like her. I'll think about it."

That was all there was of the entry, and there was not another thing in the book which even remotely referred to the incident that engaged Jack's attention just then.

Jack was still thinking about it, however, when they drove into South Norwalk.

CHAPTER VII.

ON THE TRACK OF THE MAID.

"Where now, sir?" Appleton asked, as they drove under the railroad tracks and entered the town.

"To the hat factory of Knapp & Crofut. I want to see a man there who is named Harry Cram. He is the one who mentioned that name to me when I was here last."

Jack knew where to find Cram without going into the offices of the factory.

"Hello, Mr. Cram," he said, as they met. "Do you remember me?"

"Well I should say I do, Mr. Wise," was the quick reply, given with a shake of the hand. "That was good work you did out here, too. I always said that Dick Henry was no good, particularly when he went back on the union. He hasn't broken out of prison, has he?"

"No. He is safe enough. I was just a bit curious to know what became of his wife that you told me about. Remember?"

"I don't remember that I told you very much about her, except that he married her in this town and then deserted her. The rest of it, about his coming back to her after two years, you know about better than I do."

"What was her name before he married her, Cram?"

"Coots. Mildred Coots. She was a pretty girl; and a good girl—then."

"Do you mean that she wasn't so good after he deserted her?"

"I won't say that; you might misunderstand me, you know. I don't think that there was ever anything really bad about her. She got into bad company, though. She was mighty chummy with a woman here, who afterward went to prison for stealing; but that doesn't interest you. It's rather rotten of me to tell you about it at all."

"Oh, that's all right. I don't misunderstand you, Cram. I suppose you know that we arrested Milly's husband here in South Norwalk, don't you?"

"Yes. Down near the home of Aaron Borden, her grandfather."

"He is a decent sort of an old chap, Cram; at least I found him so."

"Uh-huh. He has got money, too; enough to last him while he lives."

"I wonder if his granddaughter is back here with him?"

"Say, Wise, are you looking for her?"

"Yes, I am."

"Well, I heard the other day—a week or so ago—that she was out at service somewhere; down toward the city. I don't know where. What do you want of her?"

"Just some information. Have you seen her here in town lately?"

Cram closed one eye and meditated before he replied. Then he remarked, rather immaterially:

"I sort of remember that you told us in Mr. Knapp's office, that you were with Nick Carter, as one of his assistants. Is that right?"

"Yes."

"Well, I'm not given to fighting against women, or to letting out information about them unless I know the particulars. Whether I know anything or not, depends entirely upon what you're after. If you're a mind to tell me that—we'll see."

"Cram, I'll be perfectly frank with you," Jack said, with sudden impulse.

"That is the best way to get along with me, Mr. Wise, if anybody should ride in on the express train and ask you. What's it all about?"

"This: Mildred Coots, as we will call her, has been working as ladies' maid for my cousin, Miss Mills, at my home, Wiseacres. She was there until about nine o'clock last night, when she left suddenly, after putting every servant in the house to sleep with drugs."

"What's that?"

"It's the truth, and it isn't all of it, either."

"Go on, then, tell me the rest."

"Miss Mills, who is my cousin, and Miss Vaughn, who is my sweetheart, have both disappeared. Mildred Coots, with somebody to assist her, took them both away. I don't know why. I can't guess what the reason could have been. I only know that they have been abducted. I came to you first because I believed that you could help me, and because I felt sure that you would if you could."

"Say, you bet your life I will, if I can—only I don't know that I can."

"Try, anyhow."

"I will. You asked me a question just now, which I did not answer."

"Yes."

"Well, I'll answer it now. You asked me if I had seen Milly Coots here in town lately. I have. I saw her no later than when I was on my way to work this morning."

"You did? Where?"

"In the front seat of a big limousine car, seated beside the driver of it, who looked to me like a regular chauffeur. I passed them on the hill as I was coming down, on my way here. They were going toward Norwalk."

"Who was inside of the car?"

"I can't tell you that, because the curtains were drawn so that I couldn't see inside of it. I don't know that there was anybody inside of it at all."

"Look here, Cram, are you sure that it was Mildred Coots whom you saw?"

"Just as sure as that it is you I see before me now."

"Did you bow to her, or speak to her?"

"I don't think that she saw me at all; or if she did, she pretended not to."

"Did you know the car, or the driver of it?"

"Neither."

"What time was it when you saw her?"

"About a quarter to eight o'clock. Where is Wiseacres? How far is it from here?"

"About twenty miles, more or less."

"Well, then, if Milly left Wiseacres with the two girls, shortly after nine last night, it's a cinch that with that car she could have got a whole lot farther than this by the time I saw her, if she'd tried, and so it's pretty certain that she stopped somewhere on the way—eh?"

"Yes."

"They had rested up somewhere—and it's likely that old Borden saw her, at least. You say he knows you?"

"Yes."

"Suppose I go down and see him for you, then? He might not want to give up anything to you, and he wouldn't suspect me. I'll make it appear natural that I ask him some questions about her."

"I wish you would do that for me, Cram."

"I will. You drive around to the place where I sent you to wait for me that other time; to the club, you know. I'll steer Borden around there as soon as I've got him right. Then you can open up on him. See?"

"Yes. But can you get away from the factory?"

"I'm on piecework, and I'm an old reliable here. There won't be any difficulty about that."

Jack and Appleton drove to the club, and waited there, and within half an hour Cram appeared, accompanied by the white-whiskered old man who was grandfather to Mildred Coots. Cram drew them all into a side room.

"Mr. Wise," he said to Jack, when he had closed the door, "I have put it up to Borden straight," and he winked one eye at Jack so that nobody else saw the act. "I have made him see that he is in bad, unless he opens up and tells all he knows. See?"

"I see. Now, Mr. Borden——"

"Just a minute, please, before you begin, Wise," said Cram, interrupting. "There are one or two points that you ought to know about before you begin."

"Well?"

"Borden says that Milly came to his house last night, about one o'clock, with two young women, and that both of them had been drinking so that they didn't know what they were about. He claims that he didn't even see them, only just a glance, and that he wouldn't know either of them from a side of sole leather this morning. And he claims that he hasn't any idea where Milly has gone to now. Now go ahead. Maybe you won't have to put the old man under arrest, after all." And he winked at Jack again.

CHAPTER VIII.

TWO MEN AND A CAR.

"You remember me, Mr. Borden?" Jack asked, turning his attention to the old man.

"Yes, sir; from seeing you twice. Once when you came to my house spying after Dick Henry, and the next time when you appeared there with Nick Carter, to arrest Henry. And he and his brother are both in prison for life now. That is how I remember you—and I guess it is how Milly remembers you, too."*

"What do you mean by stating that the young women who appeared at your house last night with your granddaughter were under the influence of liquor?" Jack demanded, with the appearance of anger.

"Because that's what she told me, and that's the way they acted."

"How did they act?"

"Stupid. Drunk, if you want to know. They had to carry them into the house, and Milly put them to bed together in her step-grandmother's best room."

"Were they very ill, or suffering? I want to know, Borden. I don't want any lies or subterfuges."

"They were drunk, if you want to know." It was plain that he honestly believed what he said about it.

"Who carried them into the house?"

"The two men carried them into the house and up to the room, and after that the two girls took care of them."

"What two girls?"

"Milly and her friend."

"Who was her friend?"

"I don't know. I hadn't ever seen her before. She was some new friend of Milly's."

"What became of the men?"

"They took the car away, and I didn't see them again till this morning, and then only one of them."

"Oh, the young ladies were taken to your house in a car, and I suppose they were taken away this morning in the same car, weren't they?"

"Yes."

"Where to?"

"I don't know any more about that than you do," the old man said petulantly. "I ain't used to having such goings on at my house, I'd have you know, and I don't like it."

"You'll like it still less, I'm afraid, before you get through with this affair, unless you give me every assistance in your power. I want to know where those young women were taken, after they left your house this morning?"

"And I'd tell you if I could, but I don't know."

"Can't you guess at it?"

"I ain't a very good guesser."

"What was the condition of the young women when they were taken away from the house this morning?"

"I didn't see 'em, and so I don't know."

"Well, you heard something about it, didn't you?"

"Milly said they were both so rocky that they didn't want to be seen; that's all. I guess they just about carried 'em out of the house again, at that."

"Now look here, Borden, after your granddaughter brought those two young women to your home last night, and after she had put them to bed, it is dead certain that you made her tell you all about it. I want you to tell me everything that she told you."

"She told me mighty little."

"Don't lie to me, Borden. You're not the man to let such a thing happen without finding out all you could about it. Your bump of curiosity is too big for that. What did Milly tell you? What excuse did she make for taking them to your house?"

"I swore on my solemn oath that I wouldn't tell anybody about it, Mr. Wise, and that I'd lie like blazes about it if I was asked."

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*See preceding issue Nick Carter Weekly.

"That is all the more reason why you must tell me the exact truth about it now."

"Well, Milly said that one of the young ladies was the one she worked for, and that the other one was her friend. She said they were both highfliers when they got started, and that the most she had to do where she worked was to go with them and look out for them when they got to h'istin' it up; see?"

"Go on. Tell me all that Milly said about them. Don't leave out a single thing, as you value your own liberty."

"Well, she said one of the men was a sweetheart to one of the girls, and that the other was his chauffeur; and that they'd all been out together having a good time, and that the young ladies had drank a lot too much, and——"

"That was all a lie, Borden. You may as well know it at once. They had been drugged. Go on. Tell me all."

"I'm trying to, and you butt in all the time."

"Go on."

"Anyhow, they didn't dare go home—the two young ladies—in the condition they were in, and it wouldn't do for them to go to a hotel. Milly didn't know where to take them, so she brought them there. This morning, when they got all right again, they would go back home and each one would tell at home that she had stayed at the house of the other one. She said there would be an awful scandal if anything was ever known about it, and she made me swear that I would not tell."

"Do you mean to assure me that you believed all that Milly told you?"

"Yes, I do."

"Did you know either of the men you saw there?"

"I never saw either one of them before in my life."

"Did you know, or find out, who they were?"

"Milly called one of them Jim, and the other one Tony, if that's what you want to know. And I heard the other girl—the one that Milly said was her friend and the other maid—say something once about 'that Jim Hankinson.' Maybe that'll help."

"Perhaps it will. Any more?"

"Well, I asked Milly this morning where the two young ladies lived when they were at home."

"What did she reply to that?"

"She said 'Out Bridgeport way a piece.'"

"Nothing more definite than that?"

"No."

"You must have had an opportunity to get a good look at their car when they drove it to your door this morning. What make of car was it?"

"If it was a hat, I could tell you, maybe; but I never made no automobiles."

"The car looked to me, when I saw it, like an Arrow. I know something about a car," said Cram, interrupting. "It had a black body and was a seven-passenger car. I did not see the number, but I remember that it had a Connecticut license. I saw the C—and the last three numbers were sevens. That is all I know. Let me ask Borden a question or two, Mr. Wise."

"Go ahead."

"Borden, you said something about hats, a minute ago. You and I are both hatters. It is just as natural for you and me to notice the kind of hat that a man is wearing, as it is for a jockey to notice the kind of horse a man is riding. Now, when I saw that car going toward Norwalk this morning, the fellow that drove it had on a cap—a regular chauffeur's leather cap, and he had goggles over his eyes. But there was another man inside, probably. Maybe you can tell what he had on."

"He had on a Danbury-made hat, if it was the same one he wore last night. That's all I know," said Borden.

"Was the man who wore that hat the one who was called Jim Hankinson?" Jack demanded.

"Yes."

"Well, Mr. Borden, I'm not going to waste any more time here. My car is at the door, and you are going with me in it, to help find those men and that car. So come along."

CHAPTER IX.

THE BEGINNING OF THE CHASE.

On the steps of the clubhouse, in South Norwalk, Jack Wise hesitated.

He was confronted by the idea of what a distinct advantage it would be to him if he could take not only old Aaron Borden with him, but Harry Cram, also.

He had already seen enough of Cram to know what an invaluable aid he might prove to be when the fugitives were overtaken. He had learned one lesson well from the example of his chief, Nick Carter, and that was never to admit the possibility of defeat.

Jack realized that he had nothing to go upon in apprehending the fugitives when he should overtake them, save his own suspicions founded upon what he had heard, and officers of the law are not eager to make arrests, particularly in other States, upon hearsay evidence.

He did not believe that personally he could identify Mildred Coots as the person who had been lady's maid at Wiseacre.

He had barely seen her there at all; nor could he identify her, even, as the person he had long ago seen in the company of Dick Henry, when that person was arrested for the killing of Mr. Vaughan.

But in the three companions he had with him, all these difficulties were supplied.

Harry Cram had known Mildred since she was a girl, and there was the likelihood that he might also be able to identify one of her three immediate companions; one or both of the men, and also the unknown woman.

Aaron Borden, if he were along, would identify his granddaughter, and could be compelled to swear that she had been at his home the preceding night and had brought to it, with her, the two girls who had been abducted; also he could possibly identify the two men, and certainly the other woman, as having been of the party.

Appleton, Jack's own chauffeur, would be invaluable in connecting, indisputably, Mildred Coots with the identity of the maid at Wiseacres.

And all of these things would be absolutely necessary when he should have overtaken the fugitives and asked for their arrest and detention until extradition papers could be secured.

If the pursuit had continued as it began, within the State of New York, it would have been different; but it had been transferred to Connecticut.

The long and short of it was that Jack felt the necessity of taking all three men with him, and his own roadster car could not carry more than two persons.

It might, at a pinch, carry three, but it was better not. While he stood on the steps thinking these things over, Harry Cram answered the entire puzzle by making a casual remark.

"By the way, Mr. Wise," he said, "I saw your friend, Mr. Philip Sears, yesterday; the young man who came to the factory with you when you were here that other time, and who introduced you to my employer."

"Phil Sears! By Jove!" Jack exclaimed. And he started toward his car, then halted. "I want you to go with us, Cram," he said rapidly. "You know where Phil Sears lives? I'm going up there to borrow one of his cars. He will let me have it in a jiffy. I want you to let Appleton drive you in it, and follow my car. I will take Borden in with me."

"That is a good idea, Wise," replied Harry Cram.

"You and Appleton follow along on foot, to Sears' place. I'll go ahead with Borden. Get there as soon as you can. I'll wait for you."

He grasped the old man by one arm and half forced him into the waiting roadster, and started it immediately; nor was he long in driving it around to the Sears mansion, which, inasmuch as it belonged to one of the wealthiest residents of the neighborhood, was a well-known place in the town.

But there, at the garage, he encountered a difficulty.

The chauffeur at the garage told Jack that Mr. Philip Sears had been away from home for several days in his touring car, though he was expected home that very day. But the chauffeur had not the authority to permit Mr. Wise to take his young master's roadster, of course.

So Jack went into the house and asked for Phil's mother.

Jack and Phil had been chums at school, and Mrs. Sears made no difficulty about letting Jack have the roadster, which permission Jack managed to obtain without the necessity of telling all about the errand upon which he was engaged.

When Jack was outside again, he found that Cram and Appleton had arrived, and were waiting.

"Now look here, Appleton," he said, when they were ready to start. "That car of Phil's is as good as mine. They are about the same in power and speed. I'm going to have you take the lead in this chase, with Cram beside you; I'll follow closely with Borden."

"But why, sir? I——"

"You will do as I direct. Cram is better equipped to take the lead in this chase, just here, than I am. He has seen that other car. He can't describe it very thoroughly to another person, but if he sees it again, he will know it, all the same."

"That's right, too," said Cram.

"He knows the roads around here, and all the turns and twists of them, the byways, and all that. That is why I want him to lead."

"I understand thoroughly," said Cram, interrupting, "and I think you are right about having me lead this chase, Wise. I know the face and perhaps the name of almost every man who lives between here and Bridgeport; every garage owner and employee, every workman along the roads, every——"

"That is enough. I understand. You can question them as you go along; as I could not. You will know how and what to ask them in order to get their best information in a minute, which it might take me ten minutes to get. Go on."

"One moment," said Cram.

"Well?" Jack replied impatiently.

"Just what is your idea about this chase? Where should it lead us?"

"I don't care where it leads."

"I know; but where should we direct our inquiries first?"

"That must be left to you as you go along the road. As I understand it, there is only one really good road between here and Bridgeport——"

"Two; but the upper one is much more traveled than the lower road that goes around through Saugatuck."

"Take your own course, Cram."

"Just hold on a minute," the old man interrupted.

"Well; speak up, Borden, and do it quickly."

"I cal'late that you're figuring on keeping me with you till you find them; eh?"

"That's about the size of it."

"Well, I ain't no riding machine, if anybody should ask you. My old bones can't stand more'n a million miles the way you fellers travel. I've seen enough already to know that much."

"What are you trying to get at? Out with it."

"I guess maybe you'd oughter take the lower road, that's all."

"Why? What do you mean by that?"

"I sort 'a' remember hearing something said, and I don't know what it was, that makes me think they'd of gone that way; that's all."

Cram nodded at Jack, and winked.

"All right," said Jack. "Go ahead, Cram."

Cram put a detaining hand upon Appleton's arm once more.

"One thing more," he said: "It is better to make haste slowly, isn't it, than to go swiftly and maybe lose? That's the way I look at it."

"Of course."

"Then, don't get impatient with me if I hold up now and then to talk with men I see on the road, as we go."

CHAPTER X.

A "PAGE" FROM THE PAST.

Jack held his own car back until the other one had started; then as he was in the act of throwing in the clutch, he hesitated and called to the chauffeur who was in Phil Sears' employ, and who had viewed the whole thing with interested eyes.

"It's likely that Mr. Philip Sears may telephone to you on his way home, during the day, isn't it?" he asked.

"Yes, sir. It is very likely. I expect he will do that. He usually does, sir."

"If he does so, tell him that I have borrowed his car; that his mother loaned it to me; that I am bound for Bridgeport now, by the lower road, but am not sure that I shall go there. I may turn off somewhere before I get there. There is no telling."

"I understand, sir; I have heard what has been said."

"Well, if he should call up, tell him all that, and then this: that I am on a matter that is much like the one I had in hand when I last saw him; that I am looking for a big, limousine car with a black body, which is probably a nineteen hundred and eight Arrow; that if he should pass or has passed such a car on his way here, I want him to call up garages along the route I shall follow, till he gets one at which I have not yet arrived, and leave word there for me. That's all."

The roadster leaped forward upon its errand, following in the wake of the other car which Appleton was driving with Harry Cram at his side.

It is a matter of opinion as to which of the two roads between South Norwalk and Fairfield, which is part of Bridgeport, is the better one, the upper or the lower road.

The latter is less hilly; it follows along the shore of the sound for much of the way, passing through East Norwalk, Saugatuck, Greensfarms, Southport, and thence to Fairfield.

As he sped along, Jack realized that it would be by far the preferable road for the fugitives to take, if for no other reason than that it skirted the more thickly inhabited sections of the route; and that reminded him of the interruption that Borden had offered when they were determining which course to pursue.

That Borden had a better reason than the one he had given for saying what he did, Jack was certain; but they had passed through East Norwalk—Jack noticed that Appleton had slowed down his car once in passing through it, evidently to permit his companion to ask a question and receive a reply from some person to whom he shouted—and were rapping the wind along a country road, when Jack said to his companion abruptly:

"Why did you select this road, Borden?"

"I told you the reason," was the half-surly reply.

"You did not tell me all of it."

"Well, there ain't any more to tell, anyhow."

"I think there is, and I want you to tell it, Borden. You've got to help out on this affair, or you'll find yourself in deeper trouble than you have ever been in during all your long life. You're an old man, aren't you?"

"I be."

"Well, you're much too old to go to jail now, after keeping out of it so many years."

"I ain't done anything to send me to jail, Mr. Wise."

"No; you have not; but you have let others do things which will send you to jail along with them unless you now do all you can to remedy the faults you have permitted."

"Say, young man, if I knew anything about where they was going, I'd tell you; but I don't know, and so I can't tell."

"I am quite willing to believe you; but you do know something—I have no idea what it is, but you can tell me—something that made you say what you did about taking this lower road."

"It ain't nothing at all."

"Which reply means that it distinctly is something. Now, what is it?"

"Well, there's a lot of places along this road that have been used all summer, and a good many of 'em have been deserted for the winter now. It ain't November yet, but the nights are cold, and people don't like to stay along the shore quite so late as this."

"Just what do you mean by that?"

"It struck me that if they was going to hide up anywhere along the route, they might select such a place as I have mentioned; that's all."

"And you know of such a place as that which they might possibly select? Is that what you mean?"

"Maybe."

"Out with it."

"I don't know of such a place, and that's flat! What I do know is—and what made me choose this road, too—is that Milly knows this road and every house on it after we pass a certain place, and it's more'n likely, if she is going to hide them folks away, that she'd know just what house to select. Now, can you git anything outa that?"

"You actually know of such a house, don't you?"

"I know of one where she has been a welcome visitor; where she went every year, to spend a week or two. *And* that's all."

"Where is that house you speak of?"

"Oh, it's back from the road a piece, on high ground that overlooks the sound."

"Whose house is it?"

"Well, it belongs to Mal Page, if you want to know, though I don't suppose the name means any more to you than if I'd said Bob Brown, does it?"

"Mal Page? What is that first name in full? Is it Malvin?"

"Yes."

"I used to know a man by that name. He was a valet to General Wise. Hardly a property owner, I should say. It cannot be the same person."

"Oh, I dunno; maybe it is, after all. I've heard it said that young Mal went into some kind of service after his old man died and didn't leave anything at all. Mal used to be a no-good sort of a chap, and he didn't know much more than how to dress himself, although folks did say that he was smart enough if he had a mind to be. There was old Mal, and young Mal; see?"

"Wait just a minute, Borden. Let me describe the Malvin Page I know—or knew, a few months ago. I'd really like to know if you refer to the same man."

"Go ahead, sir."

"He was rather handsome. He was always very pale, as if there wasn't much blood under his skin. He had a straight nose, thin lips, very cold, clear eyes, and big, white teeth. He shaved clean, and he had a habit of pinching the lobe of his right ear when he was thinking."

"Say, that's him to a T, Mr. Wise."

"How did you happen to know him, Borden?"

"He used to come courtin' one of my other granddaughters, that died. Then, after Milly was left by her husband, he sorta took up with her, and I always thought she liked him. I think maybe she'd have married him if it hadn't been that she had a good-for-nothing husband already."

Jack glanced ahead to see that the road was clear and straight; then he turned his eyes for a moment full upon the old man beside him.

"Borden," he said, with slow emphasis, "you recognized Malvin Page, in one of those two men who appeared at your house in South Norwalk last night, didn't you?"

"No; I didn't—but I'm blowed if I didn't think I did, till Milly swore that it wasn't him. That's what; and I ain't been able to get it outa me since, either."

"You thought that one of those men was Malvin Page, did you?"

"I did."

"Which one?"

"The one they called Jim; the one whose last name was said to be Hankinson."

"And Milly denied to you that he was Malvin Page?"

"Yep."

"You still think that she deceived you about it, don't you?"

"Yep."

"Well, I think so, too. He called himself James Malvin Page, when he was valet for General Wise. I had considerable to do with him then. Mr. Borden, I'm very glad indeed that I decided to bring you along with me. Now tell me at once where is the house you just referred to as belonging to Malvin Page?"

CHAPTER XI.

THE NAILED-UP DOOR.

Along that wide and level road, which, although not straight, was made in curves so gradual that it might almost as well have been, they made splendid speedway.

Either of the cars could make, when crowded to it, upward of sixty miles an hour, and between the times when Cram signaled to Appleton that he wished to slow up to speak with some person at a place they were passing, they were put at their best licks.

And so by the time Jack had drawn the foregoing information from the old man, they had whirled through Saugatuck and were well on their way toward Greensfarms.

They were now crossing a bridge over the New Haven Railroad tracks beyond Saugatuck, and then began the descent of a sharp but short hill; and right there Jack saw the other car pull up and stop, and saw Cram lean from it to speak with a man who was driving a horse in the opposite direction.

They were still talking when Jack came up behind them and stopped; the man with the horse and buggy drove on toward Saugatuck, but Appleton and Cram waited in their car, and the latter half turned around to motion to Jack to pull up alongside of them.

"Mr. Wise," he said, "I don't know that I am anywhere near right—but I think, maybe, I have identified that big car that the fugitives were driving."

"Good," said Jack.

"Understand, I'm not at all sure of it. I don't want to be called down for it afterward, if I am mistaken."

"You won't be, Cram."

"When I saw that car this morning, in South Norwalk, it struck me as being familiar; only I just said to myself that all cars, like all negroes and Chinamen, look alike to some people."

"Tell me what you want to say, for Heaven's sake, Cram!"

"Well, there used to be a rich man around here who went broke in Wall Street—or in playing the ponies; or both. He died in the fall of nineteen-eight. He had just bought an Arrow limousine that year. I know that, because I was one of three who rode in it the first time he got drunk."

"Well? Well?"

"His name was Page. This man we just passed, with whom I was talking, is name Gaudet. He used to be station agent at Saugatuck. See?"

"I don't see the connection."

"I stopped Gaudet to ask him if he had seen such a car as the one I saw in South Norwalk this morning, and he said the only one he had seen that was like it was Malvin Page's old Arrow. He said, also, that young Jim Mal, as we always called the son around here, has been driving it since he came home to the old place from the city, about the first of July. And Gaudet saw that car this morning when it crossed the bridge over the river just this side of Saugatuck."

"That's the car we want," said Jack. "Find it, if you can—if you have any idea where it can be found."

"There is only one place to look for it, and that is at the old Page place. I wanted to ask you if you thought it worth while to swing off of the main road long enough to look it up."

"I certainly do—if you know where the old Page place is located."

"Do I? I should think so. But we've got to leave the main road——"

"I don't care a hang about that. Find it. Go there."

"It's down toward Compo Beach."

"Go there. Go on! Don't talk about it, but go."

"Right-o. Go on, Appleton."

Jack made no remark to his companion when they started on again, until they had covered some distance; then he said:

"Borden, I have been thinking over your case. I was angry just now, and I was very much inclined to give you all that's coming to you for not telling me all of this before. But I'll let up on you if you will reply to some questions now, and tell the whole truth. You'll go to jail, if you don't."

"I will, Mr. Wise; really I will."

"Then listen to me, first. Page fits into my scheme of things, so far as this case is concerned, and I want you to tell me more about him and what he has been doing lately, if you know, and I think you do."

"Honestly I know mighty little, Mr. Wise."

"Harry Cram said just now that young Page came back to this part of the country, and began to use that old car that had been his father's, about the first of July. He was valet to General Brayton Wise up to the thirteenth of June, when the general was killed, and that would have sent him back here at about that time."

"I understand, sir."

"It was about the tenth of June when Mildred's husband, Dick Henry, reappeared in South Norwalk. It was way along in September when Nick Carter and I arrested Henry, in front of your house. After that I suppose Milly went home to you to live, didn't she?"

"She did, yes, sir."

"What I want to know is this: Did Malvin Page begin his attentions to Milly again, as soon as her husband was arrested and sent to prison?"

"You might say that he did. He came to see her quite often."

"In that car?"

"He never drove any car to the house; Milly wouldn't let him do that. But I used to know that she'd been out riding in one—and I wouldn't know one automobile from another. They ain't in my line."

"But the point is that Mal Page as you call him, has been calling upon Milly, and has been paying her attention since her husband was sent to prison. Is that right?"

"Yes, sir."

"Wasn't it he who suggested that she should take a place out at service, and didn't he have something to do with the selection of the place she took?"

"I don't know that, but it's likely enough. I have heard 'em talking about it."

"Did you hear the name Wise mentioned at any time?"

"Nope."

"Or Wiseacres?"

"Not that I remember."

"When was he at your house last?"

"Last night, if that was him."

"Before that?"

"The day that Milly went away. He took her away that day, and I have always thought they went in an automobile."

"That's all."

They swung over the crest of a hill just then, and came in sight of the sound—or rather, of that old inlet that has become famous for the oysters it used to produce, known as Mill Pond—and a little farther down the road Jack saw Appleton slow down and stop his car before a lane which led up to a dilapidated old farmhouse that was nevertheless most beautifully situated.

"That's the Page place, there," said Borden, pointing.

Jack saw Cram leap from the car, and then he drew up alongside himself, and also jumped out.

"This is the place, West," Cram said. "Now we're under your orders again. What's to be done, now that we're here? The place looks deserted."

"It does, for a fact. But we will find out. Appleton, stand here with Borden. Come on, Cram."

He lifted a wire loop from the top of the picket gate, opened it, and passed inside; and he ran up the lane between the trees, toward the house.

Every blind was closed and a plank was nailed acrooss the front door at top of the old-fashioned stoop.

"Go and pound on that door, Cram," Jack ordered. "I'll go around the house and see what is to be found there. It looks as if the heads of those nails in that plank against the door are new, as if it had just been nailed up. Find out."

CHAPTER XII.

THE "GET THERE" AND THE "HURRY UP."

"Hello, there!" a loud voice called to Jack from the orchard back of the house, as Jack ran around it toward the rear.

He stopped, and replied, and he saw a man approaching him who was very evidently a farmer, for there are still some real farmers left around that neighborhood. He had his trousers tucked inside the tops of his cowhide boots, and he wore overalls and blouse—and he looked as though he shaved only every Sunday morning.

"Hello," Jack replied, and was about to ask a question, when the farmer saved him the trouble.

"If you're lookin' for Jim Mal, he's gone," he said, approaching. "I suppose you're a friend of his'n, ain't you, or you wouldn't be here lookin' for him?"

"I used to know him quite well," Jack replied truthfully. "You say that he has gone away? I hoped to find him here."

"Yep; he's gone, all right. Went away about noon; him and the others."

"Oh; the others went with him, did they? All four of the ladies, and—er——"

"And Tony. Yep. He went, too. I saw 'em goin' and I figgered that he wasn't goin' to pick his apples this fall, so I hustled down to ask him about 'em. He said I could have 'em, all right, and I was jest over here lookin' at 'em when you came."

"Now that's too bad," said Jack, as if he were very greatly disappointed by what he had heard. "Jim Mal forgot to give me the address so that I could find him, and they really need me to make up the party."

The farmer chuckled.

"Seeing as there was four gals and only one man besides Tony, I should say you was needed bad, mister," he said.

"Where did they go? Do you happen to know that? By the way, here is a five-dollar bill for you to put on the plate next Sunday, if you care for it?"

"Well, unless you insist upon my doin' just that particular thing with it, I'll take it, sir, and thank you kindly, too. They went in the big launch that was here."

"Oh; in the launch. I see. But where to?"

"Search me, mister. I saw 'em put out from the old mill, straight into the sound, and they swung around toward Bridgeport—only they was headin' pretty well out, as if they wasn't goin' to stop there."

"By the way, what is the name of that launch again? You saw it, didn't you, when you went down to it to ask about the apples?"

"Sure thing. It was the *Get There.* That's the launch the old man used to own, and sold to somebody in New Haven. I guess Jim Mal has bought it back again; anyhow, he said he had."

"And you did not hear any of them say anything about what would be their first stopping place after they left here?"

"I heard Tony call out to Jim Mal, as I was coming away, that they'd have to stop somewhere for gasoline; that there wasn't enough to carry them through, or something like that."

"And where is the most likely place near here to replenish their gasoline?"

The farmer squinted his eyes toward the sound for a moment; then he replied:

"Well, the tide was almost high when they pulled outa here, and they could get into Southport just like a mice, and out again. I guess they'd stop there for it, although they might keep on to Bridgeport if they had enough."

"Thank you," said Jack.

He hastened around the house—to find that Harry Cram was in the act of closing the blinds of one of the front windows over the stoop.

Cram sprang to the ground beside Jack, and said hastily, and somewhat breathlessly:

"They have been here, but they have gone. There are plenty of marks of their presence inside the house, but nothing more than that. That blind wasn't fastened, or the window back of it, and I got inside."

"All right. Now guide me to the place in Southport where a launch starting from here at high tide would have stopped for gasoline. Can you do that?"

"You bet I can."

"They left here in a launch—the *Get There*—about noon or a little before, and they had to replenish their gasoline. There was a farmer behind the house that believed they might have secured gasoline at Southport."

"If the tide was high—yes."

"It was."

"And they went in the *Get There?*"

"Yes. You know the launch?"

"I should think so. It was old Mal's. The things he didn't do with it—well!"

"Is she fast? How long would it take her to make the run to Southport, do you think?"

"After she got started? Maybe half an hour; maybe more. But to get in there, and fill their tank, and get out of the creek again, and away, a good hour and a half, if I am any judge."

"I think you are, since you know the boat. How long will it take *us* to get there, with these two cars?"

"Twenty minutes, if we are not stopped on the road for speeding."

"Well, go ahead, and get there. And remember that I want to get the *Get There.*"

That dash from Mill Pond, at Compo Beach, to Southport, Jack Wise never forgot.

He asked Borden only one question while they were on the way, and that was: "Have you heard Milly or Page say anything about a gasoline launch?"

The reply was in the negative.

Jack felt that the chase was growing hot by that time. The time was two o'clock, and he believed that by the moment they would arrive in Southport—if the launch had indeed stopped there for gasoline—he would be less than an hour behind the fugitives.

He had heard enough to suppose it not likely that they would have selected Southport for their call for fuel, unless their supply was nearly exhausted; they would keep on to a more available point, such as Bridgeport, if they had enough to last them to that place.

The post office, general store, meat market, and gasoline supply place at Southport is right at the landing in the creek, and the first man they questioned—they did not stop to ask his name—replied:

"Yep. Sure. The *Get There* was here. She filled her two tanks and went out again. Mr. Page and Tony, his man, was with her, and they had some wimmen aboard. I saw one of them. Just caught a glimpse of her, that's all."

"How long ago was that?"

"They left here with the turn of the tide, and that was about ten minutes after one."

"Do you know where they were going?"

"Ain't any idee at all."

"Do you know which way they headed when they left the creek?"

"Say, if my eyes was made like corkscrews, mebby I could tell that; but seein' as they ain't, I don't know, mister; but if you should ask me, I'd make a guess that they wasn't goin' to stop anywhere close by."

"Why not?"

"'Cause they went into the store while the tanks was fillin' and laid in enough canned stuff and meat and such to last 'em a week or two, accordin' to my way of thinkin'."

"Do you know of a swift launch around here that I could hire?"

"Nope. There ain't anything at all that could hold a candle to the *Get There,* except Mister Poole's *Hurry Up,* and he'd no more let you have that than——"

"Who is Mr. Poole?"

"He lives in that big house over there on the bluff. He's a millionaire, and——"

The whir of an automobile, and the toot of a horn interrupted what he would have said, and a voice sang out lustily from the car which came to a stop near them at that moment. It was the voice of Philip Sears calling a hearty greeting to Jack Wise.

"Just got your message up in the village; thought you might be here," he said.

CHAPTER XIII.

A CHASE ACROSS THE WATER.

Jack Wise uttered a sharp exclamation of pleasure, and sprang to the side of Philip's car.

"Phil!" he cried. "My, but I'm glad you're here! Do you——"

Phil Sears interrupted him laughingly.

"I stopped up at the bend, in the village, to telephone to Mike, at the garage. He told me what you had said. There was a chap there said he saw two cars coming down this way a little bit ago. I thought it might be you. Here I am. Now, what's sizzling?"

"Everything, Phil. Do you know a Mr. Poole, who lives over in that house, there, on the bluff?"

"Tom Poole? I should say so. What about him?"

"Will he lend you his launch? The *Hurry Up*, she is called, I think."

"He'd lend me his undershirt if I should ask for it."

"Then don't waste time asking questions. Turn your car around and lead the way over there while there is water enough in the creek to get outside with the launch. Borrow it for me; then come aboard with me, if she will carry us all. That's all for now."

Sears saw the earnestness in Jack's face, and he did as he was told, without asking questions.

"Sure I'll let you take her," was the reply that Tom Poole made to Philip Sears, when he heard the request a few moments later. "There is only one condition: My own man must go along to run her—and you'll have to hurry to get outside with this tide."

They did hurry, too.

"What I'd like to know," Philip Sears said to Jack, as they passed into the sound from the creek—and Jack had used the intervening time in telling Sears all about what had happened and what was doing—"is how you expect to follow the *Get There*, now that you've got a swifter boat under you? How in blazes do you know what way to turn?"

"Interrogation points," was the reply.

"Eigh?"

Jack pointed toward a fisherman who was seated under the thwart of an anchored skiff a quarter of a mile farther out, and he directed the man at the wheel to run the launch close to the skiff, so that he could speak; and as soon as they were abreast of it he called out:

"I don't want to disturb your fishing, but will you please tell me which way the *Get There* headed, when she went out an hour ago?"

Instead of replying, the man stood up in his boat, shaded his eyes, and peered for a long time across the water, so that Jack was compelled to have the engine of the *Hurry Up* stopped while he waited for an answer.

It came at last, and with a certainty that was gratifying.

"There she is, now," he said, pointing. "Maybe you can't see her very well, but I can, 'cause I know where to look for her. I guess she's bound for Port Washington, across the sound. She had some engine trouble just after she got outside, and was held up for a long time before they got it fixed, or else I wouldn't have known."

There were glasses as part of the equipment of the *Hurry Up*, and Jack lost no time in making use of them.

It was with a sense of elation that Jack realized that he was really and truly within sight of the fugitives.

There, on that boat which could barely be discerned in the distance, was the girl he loved better than his own life. And the girl who was as dear as ever a real sister could have been, was with her.

And both were in some kind of peril.

After half an hour of chasing, they could see the other boat much more clearly, and they had gone far enough to know that there was no intention on the part of the skipper of the *Get There* to make Port Washington.

Nor was the other boat hurrying.

Evidently the people aboard of her had little fear that they were being pursued, for they might have made much better time than they actually did.

The speck which they had first discovered when the fisherman pointed the fleeing boat out to them grew larger; it presently took the form of a boat; then they could see the figures of the persons aboard of her, and Jack, with his glass, began vainly to try to discover Mabel or Connie among them.

He could see two women and two men, and the two women he believed must be Mildred Coots and her unknown companion; the two girls who had been stolen away from their homes must have been confined in the cabin, or reluctant to leave it.

The man at the wheel of Jack's craft, who also managed the engine for them, had been regarding the fleeing boat closely, also, and now Jack turned toward him.

"They're not going into Port Washington, that's evident," he said.

"No, sir."

"Port Jefferson, perhaps."

"Maybe. You can't tell yet."

"Are we doing our best?"

"Our level best; yes, sir; and if things don't change, we can overhaul them in two hours, or even less."

"Then why——"

"Mr. Wise, they are going to drop to the fact that they are chased, before long. I saw evidence of it the last time I used that glass. Will you let me have it again?"

Jack passed the binoculars to him. Presently the man said:

"They are onto us, Mr. Wise."

"What do you mean by that?"

"They have done something to give her a little more speed. We have been trailing them so closely that they have become nervous about it."

The man still kept the glasses to his eyes, studying the other boat. Presently he remarked:

"They surely are worried about us, sir."

"Why? What makes you think so?"

"They half changed their course, then came back to the old one, as if they thought they'd turn back for Port Washington. Hello, there they come, now."

Jack could see, with his naked eyes, that the other boat had altered her course.

"They're going to make a try for Port Washington, and they'll make it, too, long before we can do it."

"But we can overtake them there, can't we?"

"If they haven't telephoned for automobiles to meet them there; or telegraphed."

"Can you make any better speed than you are making now?"

"No, sir. Not a bit better. They will get inside long before we can overtake them—unless something happens to their engine. That fisherman said that something did happen to it back there, and maybe it might happen again. That is the only hope I see of overtaking them now."

Philip Sears leaped to his feet.

"Engine! Engine! Break down!" he yelled excitedly, as if in the hope that the machinery of the escaping boat could hear, understand, and would obey.

And indeed it could be seen that something had happened to the other boat, or among the passengers aboard of it. It was difficult to determine what it was.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE PLOTTERS.

Mabel Vaughan and Constance Mills, the two young women who had been so summarily abducted from Wiseacres, very properly considered that they had been badly used, and the remarkable thing about it to them was that they had no idea what it was all about.

Mabel had a better understanding of what had happened in the beginning than Connie.

They had been seated at table enjoying their dinner when Connie, after swallowing a portion of the wine that Pierce's assistant had decanted for her, complained of sudden bad feelings, which she did not stop to explain or describe, but ran from the room at once.

Mabel, who had not taken any wine, followed.

But she did not overtake Connie until the latter stumbled through the doorway of her own room on the next floor and fell, prone and unconscious, upon the rug.

Mabel was badly frightened and ran to her.

With unnatural strength, brought about by her excitement, she succeeded in lifting her companion from the floor and bearing her to the bed, where she brushed aside the pillow cover, as Jack found it later, and quickly disposed of Connie.

Then she called Connie's name aloud several times, and worked over her.

When Connie did not reply, Mabel was badly frightened, and she ran from the room and down the stairs to the dining room—to become quickly terrified by what she found.

The under servants seemed suddenly to have lapsed into unconsciousness.

She ran to the housekeeper's room, only to find Mrs. Seymour in the same condition.

She noticed, as she ran back through the hall, that Pierce, the butler, had also succumbed to the mysterious condition.

Frantic then with terror, she ran back to Connie's room, where her first thought was to telephone to Jack.

It was while she was calling frantically upon Jack for assistance that she was attacked from behind. She struggled so bravely against her enemies that the chair was overturned, and the tablecover pulled to the floor, with its contents.

After that she knew nothing.

Afterward, however, there was a hazy recollection of certain things.

There had seemed to be a ride in the open air. Then she was lifted in somebody's arms. Then there was a bed, and two women bending over her. Then utter forgetfulness.

Then a half-conscious realization of daylight; another ride; grass under her feet; fences and trees; water and a boat; a rocking sensation—and then, at last, a sudden and full return to consciousness as complete as when one wakes from a deep sleep.

Later, it was found that the drug used upon the two girls and upon the servants at Wiseacres was canibus indica, sometimes called hasheesh.

The mere name of it explained the semiconscious state—that is, the ability to walk if led and to do things which would impress an observer with the idea of half intoxication—coupled with entire forgetfulness.

Under the influence of canibus indica, administered in the right proportions, a subject of it preserves many of the physical powers and some of the mental ones, apparently, but always with entire forgetfulness of identity.

Inevitably it leaves a person with no recollection whatever of what has taken place under its influence. As inevitably, when the effect of it disappears, it does so suddenly, and the subject is almost instantly restored to a full sense of surrounding circumstances.

Malvin Page, the real instigator of all this plot, had once been a medical student.

As such, he had become addicted to the use of hasheesh, and, as a consequence, he had learned how to administer it not only from the study of it, but from the abuse of it upon himself.

The powder of it introduced into the wine that was served to the young ladies, and which Mabel did not taste, and pellets of it made into paste and put into candy which Mildred Coots passed around among the servants of the household, had disposed of them.

When Mabel was seized while she was at the telephone, one of the pellets was forced between her lips and held there while it dissolved.

So it was all very simple and easy, so far as the work of the new maid was concerned.

The time for taking the girls away from the house was chosen while the chauffeur was away gathering up the young women who were to make up the party for that evening.

Then Mildred and Page, and the other woman who was Mildred's friend and also the wife of Tony, who was Page's man of all work, had seized upon such things in Connie's room as they desired to take with them, and had fled away in the old Arrow car which Jack Wise had so fortunately succeeded in tracing.

The ride of twenty miles or more from Wiseacres to South Norwalk was taken while Mabel and Connie were entirely stupefied by the drug they had swallowed.

Thus they had been half carried, half walked, into Borden's house, and thus it was that Borden had been made to believe that the young women were really intoxicated.

More of the drug had been administered to them the following morning.

The ride in the car to Compo Beach, then the clear, salt air of the sound and the motion of the boat, had all served their purpose upon the two girls, with the result that while they remained drowsy and inert during the run to Southport and thence again to the sound, they were gradually coming out of the effects of the canibus indica.

It was rather remarkable that both roused to consciousness almost at the same moment.

Mabel awakened, half dazed, raised her tired head, and studied her surroundings—to discover that Connie was doing the same thing.

They stared at each other speechlessly.

They sat thus, facing each other, each trying to remember, and each uncertain of the facts by which they were confronted.

"What does it mean?" Connie demanded of Mabel.

"We're on a boat!" Mabel exclaimed.

"And on the water," Connie assented.

"Boats usually go on the water," Mabel remarked.

Then they both laughed, rather weakly; but things were getting clearer.

"How'd we get here?" Connie demanded.

Mabel started to her feet, tottered weakly for a moment, steadied herself by putting one hand against the bulkhead, and then peered through one of the small openings of a ventilator hatch, to the deck outside.

What she saw startled her so that she barely re-pressed an outcry, and she turned hastily, putting her fingers to her lips to enjoin silence upon Connie.

Connie arose in obedience to a gesture and stepped to Mabel's side. Then they both looked through the square opening.

Seated upon the deckhouse of the cabin, up near the bow of the small vessel, was Connie's maid, Mildred Coots, and beside her, and close to her, was a man whom they both instantly recognized as a former valet of General Wise's—James Malvin Page.

"It's Page, the valet," said Connie, in a whisper.

"And that is your maid, Milly Coots, with him," said Mabel. "Hush! They are talking. I wish we could hear what they are saying."

Connie put her lips close to Mabel's ear, and whispered:

"There is another ventilator hatch farther forward, and it is open. If we could get to that one, we might hear what they are saying."

They crept forward through the cabin, and presently stood under the forward hatch.

From that place they could both see and hear, for they were directly behind the two persons who were talking.

"When we get them there, it will all be easy going," Page was saying. "They will be as safe as a church, and we can take our own time in carrying out the rest of the plan."

"You seem to regard it as impossible that we should be caught," Mildred replied.

"I do."

"Well, I don't."

"Who is to catch us, I'd like to know?"

"That young Jack Wise."

"Nonsense!"

"You may think so, but I don't. Mabel was telephoning to him when I jerked her away from the telephone last night. She had already said enough to take him out to Wiseacres flying."

"Well, what of that?"

"I'm afraid that he'll catch up with us, that's all."

"He can't."

Mildred Coots shrugged her shoulders.

"I haven't forgotten how he followed my husband and caught him," she said.

"Bosh! What would he find to follow, when he got to Wiseacres?"

"He would find a lot more than he would have discovered if Mabel had drank some of her wine, too. Just because she didn't do that, it spoiled everything."

Page nodded.

"If she had done that, the servants would have woke up and thought that nothing special had happened, and would have gone about things, and we would have had all day to-day to make our escape. As it is——"

"Well? As it is—what?"

"I feel as though that young Jack Wise would catch us."

"Nonsense!"

"I feel that he is not far behind us right now."

"All bosh, Milly!"

She pointed toward a black object upon the water far astern of them.

"It would not surprise me if he were in that boat, there," she said.

"Oh, you're losing your nerve, that's all that's the matter with you, Milly. But you'll feel all right when we get to the place where I am taking you. Nobody will ever think of looking for those girls there; nobody will ever think that we could be there, and we'll have the game in our own hands after that."

"Mal, don't you suppose there'll be a hue and cry after us for this thing?"

"There'll be one after the girls, all right."

"The whole country will be stirred up."

"Sure to be, at first, only I have thought of a way to stop it."

"You have? How?"

"I'll make the girls write letters home, as if they'd eloped, or something like that; and then I'll take the letters to Albany, or to Boston, or to Philadelphia, or some other place, to post. Anyhow, I don't think they will hold out against us more than a few days."

"I don't see how you are ever going to get any money out of it without being caught."

"Don't you? Well, I do."

"How?"

"Never mind how, Milly. I'm too fly to get caught at a trick like this one. We can always separate the two, and then get money enough out of one of them to pay for both, and we can hold the second one until we have got the dough. I'll guarantee one thing."

"What is that?"

"Why, that as soon as I have had the two of them for twenty-four hours at the house where we are taking them, over on Long Island, and they find out what they are up against, if they do not agree to my terms, they'll come to time quick enough."

"You promised me, Mal——"

"Never mind what I promised you. I'll probably keep it. But that doesn't say that I won't make both of them think that the only way to save themselves will be to come to my terms."

"Mal," she said, as if with a suddenly fearsome thought, putting out one hand and resting it upon his arm, "do you think that you can control Tony?"

"Sure I can. What's the matter with Tony?"

She shrugged her shoulders, and did not reply at once. Then she said:

"I think you had best keep an eye on him, that is all."

There was a moment of silence after that. The two girls under the ventilator almost held their breath in fear and trembling.

They could not realize the depth of the plot that was working against them, but they had heard enough to know that money was to be extorted from them in some manner, and that they were to be exposed to unnamed terrors unless they should agree to the terms that would be offered them.

Then Mildred Coots half started to her feet, and pointed astern.

"Look!" she said excitedly. "I believe that boat is chasing us."

"Nonsense!" said Page. But he also arose and looked toward the boat.

CHAPTER XV.

MABEL'S BRAVE ACT.

For a moment they stood there looking aft at the approaching boat, which was plainly gaining upon them.

"Let's ask Tony what he thinks about it?" Page said, and led the way toward the stern of the boat, where Tony was at the wheel, with his wife beside him.

Mabel and Constance followed through the cabin, and they ensconced themselves close beside the steps of the companionway.

They could see nothing there, for the reason that they had to keep out of sight themselves, but they could hear all that was said between the four who were on the deck near the steering wheel.

"What do you think about that craft astern of us, Tony?" Page demanded of his man.

"I can't tell," was the reply. "Only, judging by her speed, I should say that it might be Tom Poole's boat, the *Hurry Up*."

"But I saw her moored off his place at Southport, when we came out of the creek," Page disagreed.

"I know it."

"You think, nevertheless, that the boat is his?"

"I don't know another one around this part of the sound that can go as fast as the *Hurry Up*."

"Well, then, if it is Poole's boat, they are chasing *us*."

"Looks like it."

"Can we make Port Jefferson ahead of them?"

"No, sirree!"

"You think they will overhaul us before we can get there?"

'Sure to, if that is what they are after."

"Maybe, in that case, we had better turn into Port Washington."

"That is the only thing to do, if that boat *is* chasing us. The probability is that she isn't—but you can't tell."

"Head for Port Washington, then. You can make that, can't you, before they do?"

"Yes, I think so, and with half an hour to spare. Only——"

"Well, what?"

"That isn't where you telegraphed to have the conveyances meet us."

'What of that? We can find others."

'Yes. And get chased, afterward."

"Better that than to get caught out here, isn't it?"

"I don't know. That's for you to say."

"Head her for Port Washington, anyhow."

"All right! You're the boss." And Tony brought the boat around upon the desired course.

"We can beat them into Port Washington, all right, can't we?" Page asked again, looking nervously back along their wake."

"Yes," said Tony, "if we don't have any more engine trouble."

When Mabel heard Tony say that, she grasped Connie's arm with a force that nearly produced an outcry.

Constance, looking half petulantly at Mabel, saw that the latter had her fingers pressed against her lips, and was rapidly but silently extricating herself from the crouched position beside the companionway steps.

In a moment more Mabel had freed herself, and still with two of her fingers held against her lips, she glided away toward the forward end of the boat—and Connie, wonderingly, followed her.

The engine of the boat was set almost in the middle of the cabin. There was a narrow passageway on either side of it, by which a person could approach a tiny stateroom on the starboard side, and the galley on the port side of the craft.

Mabel followed the one on the port side, passed through the galley, and thence, by a very small doorway, through the bulkhead into the chain locker at the bow—for it was there where the gasoline tank was located.

It was just a mere chance of fortune that Mabel had once been taken aboard of a cruising launch by some friends, and had investigated every part of it. In that last remark made by Tony, she had bethought herself of a story that she had heard told on that occasion.

All that she remembered of it was that one of the men had told another how he had toiled and toiled nearly half a day over an engine that had refused to work, only to discover at last that there was no trouble at all with the engine, but that something had fallen against the cock that was up in the bow close to the gasoline tank, and had turned off the supply of fuel—and nobody had suspected what was the matter.

Mabel wondered if there was a place in this boat where she could turn off the supply of gasoline, and she resolved on the instant to find out.

That was why she went forward.

She crept through into the chain locker, while Connie stood at the narrow doorway watching her.

For a time Mabel did not know just what to look for, or what to do with it when she found it, but presently she spied a small pipe which her judgment told her must be the means of carrying the fuel to the engine.

She searched along that until she came to a place close to the tank where there was a small brass arrangement which she would unhesitatingly have named a faucet.

She realized at once that that must be the thing she sought, and she reached forward and turned it. Then she darted back again through the narrow doorway where Connie was awaiting her.

"Quick!" she said. "Get back to that place where you woke up. Pretend to be unconscious. It is the only way."

"What have you done?" Connie asked, hastening to obey.

"I think I have turned off the gasoline. I don't know. Hurry!"

"What will it do, if you have?"

"It will stop the boat."

"But it hasn't stopped."

"Ninny, of course not! There was some of it in that pipe, I suppose. But when that is gone—— Oh, hurry, won't you?"

But the engine still ran smoothly, even after they had both resumed their places upon the lockers, and Mabel began to fear that she had made a mistake, after all.

Indeed, she was on the point of rising to go forward again, when even her unpracticed ear told her that the engine was not working just as it should. And as if in support of that idea, Tony could be heard saying things which were not exactly polite.

If the two girls, now trembling with suppressed excitement, had understood the significance of what they heard, they would have known that the engine was missing an explosion every little while, and that the misses occurred more frequently with every moment that passed.

Tony jumped down into the cabin and began to examine the engine, but apparently he could find nothing the matter with it.

Then came Page, who could do no better.

Once the girls heard Page exclaim angrily at a sore finger he had, and Connie almost smiled when she heard him say to Tony:

"Gee! but that hand is sore where I scratched it on that snake toy. It gave me a good dig, too."

None of them knew that Jack Wise had discovered that broken toy, and had surmised what part it had played in the abduction.

Then the engine stopped altogether.

They cranked it over and over again, but uselessly. It would not work.

They sought for every trouble they could think of which might have affected it, but sought in vain, and at last Page exclaimed:

"Well, there is nothing to do now but to wait till that boat catches us. Maybe they are not chasing us, and, if not, it will be all right. If they are, we'll fight."

"Anyhow," said Tony, "the girls are dead to the world yet."

CHAPTER XVI.

THE RESCUE.

Meantime, those on board the *Hurry Up* saw that the *Get There* had met with some sort of an accident to her engines, and she had stopped. She was as helpless on the water as a rowboat without oars.

Jack sent Borden and Cram into the cabin, and himself kept out of sight, for he had no doubt that the people on the other boat were studying them with their glasses by now, and he thought it just as well that they should see nobody whom they could recognize.

In that he was wise, indeed, for when they did come up alongside, Philip Sears did the first questioning, under his orders.

"Ahoy, there!" he said. "Are you in trouble?"

"Nothing that we can't fix," was the reply. "What do you want, anyhow?"

"Well, we saw that ladies were aboard, and it won't be long till dark. We thought that maybe you'd like to send them ashore; eh?"

"Thank you, no."

"Is that all you've got? Just the two I see on the deck? Ladies, do you want me to take you ashore?"

It was Mildred Coots who replied in the negative.

"Run her up alongside," Jack said to his man at the wheel. Then, a moment later, when it became apparent that the order was to be obeyed, the man whom Jack had now recognized as the same Page who had once been valet to the old general, at Wiseacres, called out excitedly:

"Hey! What are you doing there?"

The boats were touching by that time, and Jack thought it the moment for his appearance.

"We are coming aboard you, Page!" he called out, and suited the action to the word by leaping from one rail to the other, and by confronting Malvin Page on the deck of his own boat.

Page struck out with all his strength at Wise.

Hot anger got the best of him.

But the blow went wild, for Jack warded it with his left, while he also struck out with his right, and sent Page sprawling to the deck—from which he did not attempt to rise. One blow from Jack Wise's fist was quite sufficient to quell the ex-valet's exuberance.

Appleton had followed him, and Appleton took care of Tony, very much after the same manner that Jack had cared for Page. Jack, calling upon the others to look out for the two men, and ordering that they be tied up forthwith, rushed toward the cabin, to which Mildred had fled with her companion.

The cabin door was closed and locked, but Jack threw his weight against it, and burst it open, and rushed inside—to find himself face to face with a spectacle that would have been ludicrous under any other circumstances.

Mabel and Connie were fighting to get to the cabin door, and Mildred and her companion were fighting to prevent them from doing so, and it looked like a very real scrap between four girls, for a moment.

But Jack's appearance stopped it bef
was done; and Mabel, breaking away
rushed into his arms—and burst into

He embraced her for a moment, then put out his other arm and took Connie into the folds of that one; and then Borden appeared in the doorway and led Mildred away upon the deck, and Philip Sears and Harry Cram looked inside, questioningly.

"All tied up, Jack," Sears said. "Crazy mad, too. What, now?"

"Take the men aboard the *Hurry Up* and leave the two women here. We'll take this craft on tow," was the reply. "Connie and Mabel will come aboard of the *Hurry Up* with us."

What was the motive for it all? A very foolish one, that could be conceived only by very foolish people, indeed.

The plot had been engineered entirely by Page, the former valet. He had believed that he could easily compel two young girls like Mabel and Connie to give up a considerable sum of money to be set free, after once he had them safely in his power; and he had believed that he could frighten them into almost anything.

He had intended to keep them prisoners aboard the boat until they could procure the money he demanded for their liberation, and that then he and Tony could escape with Mildred and the other woman, who was Tony's wife. And he intended to exact an oath from the girls that they would never prosecute.

It was simply the old story of criminals being enamored of their own wrongdoing, and believing that crime can succeed. It cannot. It never does, and it never will.

THE END.

"Nick Carter's Ocean Chase; or, The Missing Crown Diamond," is the title of the ripping, dashing, rapid-action tale that will appear in the next issue of this weekly. Under circumstances decidedly unusual and under conditions thoroughly startling, a diamond belonging to a crowned head vanishes. The discoverer of the theft comes hot-foot to Nick Carter, and Nick, in his turn, packs in a jiffy and rushes aboard an ocean liner in pursuit of those supposed to know something about the missing gem. So many things take place, then, and all so quickly, that even the stalwart Nick Carter is worn out. It's a dazzlingly brilliant tale—a six-cylinder, ninety-horse power affair that you just must read if you like excitement in your stories. It is No. 805, out June 1st.

THE NEWS OF ALL NATIONS.

Connecticut Town Owns Wooden Leg and Lends to One Who Needs It.

"This leg is the property of the town of Manchester, Conn., lent to William Armstrong, and is not to be sold or exchanged without a majority vote of the board of selectmen."

This inscription is stamped on the wooden leg which the town, after much dickering, provided for Armstrong, who arrived in Manchester two years before and had been a charge of the town ever since. One of the selectmen declined to consent to the purchase of the leg for Armstrong unless it was inscribed as stated.

Western Grain Crop So Big Railroads Couldn't Move it Fast Enough.

A shortage of freight cars, such as they had not known for years, was experienced by the railroads of Nebraska, South Dakota, and Western Iowa, due in great part to the heavy movement of grain. All elevators were filled to overflowing and railroads were simply swamped with orders for cars.

Montana Cows Eat Dynamite, Die, and Farmers Fear to Bury Them.

Eight head of the best-blooded Durham cattle in western Montana, the property of George H. Pew, a Bitter Root Valley stockman, died, apparently, as a result of eating dynamite, which had been left along the banks of a canal recently constructed by an irrigation company by Pew's ranch, near Stevensville.

The stock evinced a peculiar appetite for the explosive because of its salty taste, and nosed out about fifty pounds of powder which had been buried in the soft dirt bank of the canal.

The farmers showed no disposition to rush matters in connection with the burial of the cattle, fearful that jarring the carcasses might cause them to explode. Burn the carcasses they dared not.

Eight-hour Day on Pacific Coast a Failure.

The eight-hour day for the metal trades industry in San Francisco, Cal., is a failure and must be abandoned according to the annual report of President S. J. Eva, read in San Francisco at the fifth annual meeting of the association. The report was adopted.

Two Yellow-fever Mosquitoes 60,000,000 Years Old.

After lying dormant in larvae for sixty million years, two mosquitoes were born in Washington, D. C. Also, it being ascertained that they were yellow-fever mosquitoes, just like the ones found in Central America to-day, they were immediately executed.

Some time ago Secretary of State Alvah Adee received a somewhat curious prehistoric deposit from Brazil. Mr. Adee is a chemist, and, analyzing the rock, found two minute larvae. This astonished Mr. Adee greatly. He sent the embryonic insects to the agricultural department for further scientific investigation. Under treatment the larvae promptly developed into magnificent mosquitoes.

As the larvae were found in the interior of the rock, and Smithsonian Institution experts regard the age of the earth as anywhere from 60,000,000 to 200,000,000 years; the minimum figure has been adopted as the probable age of the Brazilian mosquitoes.

No More Onion Breath as Result of Deodorizing Process.

C. W. Brown, a farmer, living in the vicinity of Little Brooks Lake, Mich., has hit on a formula for deodorizing the onion. The onion is put into tne liquid concoction and after sufficient sousing comes up and out ready to be cooked or eaten raw, minus its obnoxious odor.

One-legged Locomotive Engineer Given $25,000 for Missing Limb.

Ed Cotton, former engineer of the Nashville, Chattanooga & St. Louis Railway, won his fight in the United States court, at Memphis, Tenn., for damages for the loss of a leg, injured when his engine crashed into another. A jury in the Federal court returned a verdict in Cotton's favor of $25,000.

Maine Woman Used a Bustle as a Bank, Depositing $10,000.

Ten thousand dollars in greenbacks, so faded and worn that they were sent to Washington for redemption, were found in a bustle that was worn for years by Mrs. Mary Fassett, of Hogdon Mills, Me., who died suddenly.

None of the bills was of a more recent issue than 1886. Mrs. Fassett distrusted modern banking methods, and always wore the bustle when outside her home.

In a search of her house after her death, relatives found about $7,000 hidden in a hundred places. One of the searchers picked up the bustle and was about to throw it away, when his attention was attracted by a rustling of paper, and the ten thousand dollars was found.

Railroad Section Hands Use Axle Grease as Butter and Enjoy It.

Butter at from 45 to 56 cents a pound did not bother a gang of foreigners employed on the Bound Brook Railroad, in Pennsylvania. They found a substitute.

A box containing thirty-six one-pound tin cans of a certain brand of axle grease was missed from the railroad supply station. The axle grease was yellowish in color—very similar to that of butter.

An investigation revealed that the gang of section hands were "living high" in their box car—spreading the axle grease in copious fashion over thick chunks of bread, making it answer the purpose of "fresh creamery butter," and, seemingly, securing just as much satisfaction as they possibly would have from the real article.

They were not prosecuted, because it possibly would have been extremely hard to place the removal of the box of grease on any one member of the gang, and because the storekeeper was inclined to the thought that any one who could use a compound which is a large percentage tar and eat it as butter, shouldn't have his fun interfered with.

John L. Sullivan's Autograph Brings High Price.

In Boston, Mass., the market price for John L. Sullivan's autograph is 75 cents, while that of Doctor Eliot, president emeritus of Harvard, is 50 cents. But then, a newspaper correspondent says, it is likely harder for Sullivan than it is for Doctor Eliot to make an autograph.

French Railways Adopt the Twenty-four-hour Clock System.

Americans who travel in France this summer may be puzzled when they find from the time-tables that their train leaves at 16:08 or 19:59 o'clock.

Victor Augagneur, French minister of public works, in Paris, has drawn up an order for the introduction of the twenty-four-hour clock system for the summer train service. That system is used on some railways of Italy.

One o'clock in the morning will remain one o'clock, and noon will remain twelve o'clock, but one o'clock in the afternoon will be discarded and thirteen o'clock substituted.

In other words, the railroad day will begin at one in the morning, but instead of using one o'clock again when the afternoon is reached the time-tables will count up to twenty-four a. m., which will be midnight. Thus there will be no duplication of figures.

"Jack the Hugger" Spots Men Dressed as Women and Refuses to Hug.

"Jack the Hugger," that personage who periodically makes his appearance in Newport, R. I., again put in an appearance, and the police laid all sorts of traps for him.

Inspector Tobin and others of the police force laid in wait in fashionable Bellevue Avenue and Central Avenue, but there was "nothing doing." "Jack" defies all attempts at capture. Inspector Tobin had the assistance of Newport young men dressed as women, but "Jack" refused to be fooled.

Motor Ice Boat With Aeroplane Engine Slides 140 Miles an Hour.

A motor ice boat, built along the general lines of an ice boat, but fitted with an aëroplane engine and propeller, attained a speed of nearly 140 miles an hour in tests on Irondequoit Bay, at Rochester, N. Y.

Lecture Sends Aged Retired Farmer Back to the Soil.

When John Lippincott heard the lectures on the farmer's educational train, he decided to go "back to the farm," although past 72 years of age.

Mr. Lippincott owns about 800 acres of good land in the vicinity of Vincentown, N. J., and for a few years has been living a retired life. He says his grounds are in the best state of cultivation, but that the men working them have not gotten all off that they should.

Mr. Lippincott is going to take his coat off and go to work actively, and hopes to get back at least some of the money he considers has been lost.

Eagles Become Chicken Stealers in Hudson River Town.

Never in the memory of the oldest inhabitants at Hastings-on-the-Hudson, N. Y., have so many eagles been seen in that town.

Since the palisades have been taken over as an interstate park by New York and New Jersey, the eagles have increased rapidly in numbers through the protection given by the game wardens. The severe winter made food scarce. The birds on two or three occasions ventured into the outskirts of the village and stole chickens.

Oregon Woman's Ashes Scattered to the Four Winds in Ohio.

J. T. Frenfrock and his daughter, of Silverton, Ore., scattered Mrs. Frenfrock's ashes from four bridges over the Blanchard River, at Findlay, Ohio, carrying out a dying request of the wife and mother. Frenfrock and his daughter made the 3,000-mile trip last week for the purpose, then left immediately on the return journey to their home in Oregon.

First Woman Judge in the United States Dispenses Justice in Cincinnati Court.

The only woman judge on the continent, Mrs. Mabel Van Dyke Bell, exercised, at Cincinnati, Ohio, for the first time her judicial functions as a United States commissioner.

"Your honor," said Attorney Lanfoisick, addressing Mrs. Bell in opening the case. She curtsied and looked solemn.

Frank Streine was the defendant. He was accused of having misused the United States mails. Mrs. Judge Bell politely held him under $500 bond for the grand jury.

Ohio Surgeons Make Appendicitis Operations a Simple Matter of One Day.

Operations for appendicitis, believed to have been perfected when one and one-half-inch incisions were found adequate, have been simplified further, according to surgeons of the Cleveland, Ohio, Academy of Medicine. The announcement says an incision of only three-fourths of an inch suffices, and that the patient treated thus may leave the bed within twenty-four hours.

Railroads Must Carry Beer into Dry States.

Beer is a commodity, and railroads must carry it, when offered for transportation from one State into "dry" counties of another State, regardless of the laws of the latter State. The supreme court of the United States, at Washington, made this ruling regarding a proposed shipment from Indiana into "dry" Kentucky counties.

Carnegie Will Erect a Fine Building in Washington for Indians.

Andrew Carnegie has found a new outlet for his generosity. He has offered to contribute $850,000 for the erection in Washington, D. C., of a magnificent home to be used as the headquarters of the Federation of North American Indians, recently organized in a convention held in Washington, at which Indians from a number of tribes were present.

A prominent architect looked over the ground and considered the site and the style to be used in the new building.

The national capital already has three buildings erected by Mr. Carnegie's donations—the Pan-American building, the Carnegie Institution of Washington, and the Carnegie public library. To the Pan-American building he gave $750,000, the Latin-American republics contributing $250,000.

Promised Sixty Times to Marry Fiancee, but She's Still Waiting.

A diary recording sixty fervid promises of marriage will be relied upon by Miss Marie Olson to obtain $50,000 from Daniel W. Wiser, a salesman, of Chicago.

Miss Olson has sued Wiser for that amount. She said she had accepted Wiser four years ago and that since that time, although he had promised to marry her at least sixty times, he had failed to do so.

Redskin George Washington Sweeps Streets of Oklahoma Town.

George Washington, a young Delaware Indian, of Tulsa, Okla., who is worth $350,000, much of which is oil and gas land, is pushing a broom on Tulsa streets as a member of the city jailer's cleaning gang.

Washington was arrested Sunday night on a charge of "loitering." With characteristic Indian stubbornness, he would not hire a lawyer, would not enter a plea, and would not pay a small fine.

A Million Farmers Instructed on Train Operated by Department of Agriculture.

Sixty-two railroad instruction trains operated during the past year by the department of agriculture covered more than 25,000 miles, and the meetings held in them were attended by nearly 1,000,000 persons, according to the report of Doctor A. C. True, director of the work. Farmers' institutes were attended by more than 3,000,000 persons, an increase of nearly 400,000 over the preceding year.

Texas Fort Turned into State Tuberculosis Sanitarium.

The passing of Fort Clark, Texas, from military to medical uses began when the last company of infantry stationed there, the Twenty-third, left for Indianapolis. It is proposed to establish a State tuberculosis sanitarium on the fort's site.

Pennsylvania Spends $200 to Regain Dog Costing One Dollar.

After litigation that has been fought in the Delaware County courts, at Derby, Pa., nearly two years, at an expense of several hundred dollars, Harry Tyler has been awarded possession of a collie dog which had been claimed by Emma Schriner.

Tyler testified that he owned the puppy, which wandered away one day to the store of Richard Purdy, whose attendant, when closing time came, gave it away to a little boy, who subsequently sold it to Mr. Schriner for $1.

Learning where his dog was, Tyler made a demand for it, but Mrs. Schriner, believing that the little animal was hers by right of purchase, refused to give it up. A law suit followed.

"Oh, You Beautiful Doll," Makes Fat Man Awful Sick.

Because a pretty girl sang to him as he sat in a box at a performance of the Elks' minstrels, at Ellensburg, Wash., J. P. Decker, a pioneer resident, is seriously ill at his home.

The Elks put on a minstrel show, which was crowded with local hits. As a part of the fun Becker was induced to sit in a box, and Lois Mason, one of the principals of the production, sang to him her song, "Oh, You Beautiful Doll."

Although Mr. Decker was prepared for the ordeal, the laughter of the audience excited him and he left the box hurriedly.

Later in the evening Mr. Decker, who is a stout man, succumbed to the excitement and was unconscious for several hours.

Italian Rites a Letta to the Fella that Sold Heem a Drumstickless Drum.

Among the numerous letters received at a drum works, at Camden, N. J., was the following:

"I got the drum which I buy from you alrite, but why you doan send me no handels? Wats the use the drum when she doan have no handels? I loose to me my customah. Sure thing you doan treat me rite. Is my money not so good to you as the otha fella? I wate ten days, and my customah he holler for the drum. You know he is hot. You doan send me that handels pretty quick I sen her back and order some drum from some otha companee. Good bye your fren Antonio S. Dutes."

In a postscript the writer adds: "Since i rite i find the handels in the box excuse me." The writer resides at San Leandro, Cal.

Makes Horses Eat Fences.

"King" Steven August, ruler of a gypsy kingdom consisting of several wagons, nine horses, two women, two grown men, four youths, and many children, was in the mayor's court at Beach City, Ohio, with a sock full of gold.

He was under arrest charged with cruelty to animals. Captain Turenne Getz, of Massillon, Ohio, humane society agent, was the prosecutor.

It was alleged that the "king" had turned his herd of horses out to pasture with the mercury anywhere from zero to twenty-two degrees below, and compelled them to melt the snow in their mouths and nibble the fences to keep them alive. Some one reported the case to Captain Getz, and he went down to look after the matter.

The imperial palace, which was a small but densely populated tent, was so full of smells that the captain was almost compelled to don an oxygen helmet when he entered with greetings and a warrant. He extended a profound salaam and then removed the king from the throne.

"King" Steven August pleaded guilty to the charge before Mayor E. E. Unstead and was fined $15 and costs. He paid the $32 in gold. Captain Getz took the horses to a livery stable, and the king graciously consented to pay their board until he could transfer them to a barn provisioned with a ton of hay, which he said he had rented.

Wright Plans a Real Airship-of-war That Will Carry Wireless.

The result of a conference between Wilbur Wright, Captain Chandler, and other officers of the signal corps at the army's aviation camp in Augusta, Ga., will, it is stated, be the development of a machine capable of carrying a greater amount of army equipment and of flying successfully in winds which the present machine cannot negotiate.

Mr. Wright, after spending a day and a half with the army officers at the camp, left for Dayton, Ohio, to work out plans for a new type and higher-power engine than that now in use.

With the development of higher power, it is understood, the aëroplane could carry, in addition to an officer and operator, the necessary amount of increased weight in wireless apparatus, distance-measuring instruments, maps, and like paraphanalia.

Strange Plant that Captures Birds and Eats 'Em Alive.

Miners and prospectors, in San Bernardino, Cal., protested at the rapid spread of the "brush trap." Their description of the strange plant sounded like fiction, but in a petition which they proposed to present to the supervisors of San Bernardino, they appeared to deal seriously as with a fact.

The "brush trap," they claimed, is a ferocious plant with hooklike thorns which entrap birds. The hooks not only serve to pierce and hold the feathered victim, but also to drink in the life fluid of the bird and thus sustain the plant, which grows in the most arid sections of the desert.

In many instances mere skeletons of birds have been found ensnared. Coyotes and foxes find the "brush trap" a source of profit, but the four-footed prowlers have to disentangle the captured bird with care, for to be thrust with a thorn means a savage tear before the coyote or fox can get away.

New York to Have Finest System of Good Roads on the Continent.

The Democratic legislature in New York made liberal appropriations for good roads, and in the highways selected for improvement every section of the State was recognized, no county suffering in the apportionment.

In addition to this it only requires the approval of the legislature of the plans prepared by the highway commission and outlined by Governor Dix in his annual message, says the *Times*, of Buffalo, to inaugurate a movement which will, in five years' time, and at comparatively small expense, give the State a complete system of serviceable market roads leading into every nook and corner of the rural portion of the commonwealth and bringing the farming communities into easy communication with their natural markets.

Kalamazoo College Students Boycott the Book Trust.

Declaring that there is a school-book trust in Kalamazoo, Mich., students of Kalamazoo College decided to organize to fight the high prices. The students perfected a scheme whereby they bought all of their books directly from wholesalers.

Albanians Pay a Penny for Each Swear Word and Give Proceeds to Charity.

"Cuss words" uttered by members of an antiswearing society, in Albany, N. Y., under penalty of a penny a piece netted charity $4.76.

The club was organized in a boarding house, and the members agreed that for every oath uttered the guilty person should deposit a penny in a box kept for that purpose.

The first few weeks, contributions were numerous, but recently they have become so infrequent that the members decided they have gained the mastery of their habit, and agreed to open the box and donate the accumulated fines to local charity. The tally taken showed a total of 476 lapses.

Mayor Gaynor Ignores Modern Literature in List of World's Sixteen Best Books.

The latest venture of Mayor Gaynor, of New York, is the compilation of a list of the world's sixteen best books, named in the order in which he believes they have influenced his life. The list follows:

The Bible, Euclid, Shakespeare, Hume's History of England (especially the notes), Homer, Milton, Cervantes, Rabelais, Gil-blas, Franklin's Autobiography and Letters, Plutarch's Lives, Autobiography of Ben Venuto Cellini, Gibbon's Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, Adam Smith's Wealth of Nations, Bacon's Essays, De Lome's British Constitution.

Tasmanian Devils on View at New York Zoo Eat Fancy Poultry.

The Bronx zoo, in New York City, is to be graced henceforth by two Tasmanian devils. They arrived on the steamship *Minnewaska*, of the Atlantic Transport Line, frightened the customhouse officials, and appeared at the park at midnight.

The two Tasmanian devils are like bulldogs in appearance, only with far larger heads and formidable teeth. They are strictly nonvegetarian, pursuing rabbits, rats, and all small mammals, and feasting, when they get the chance, on hens and fancy poultry.

They are clothed in short, black coats with crescents on their backs, and when the world looks dull to them they burrow in the ground. Like many other denizens of Tasmania they are marsupials, bearing their young ones with them in a pouch.

Fat Man Didn't Get Fat on Whisky.

William J. Longman, who weighs more than 200 pounds, obtained a verdict for $250 in the supreme court in New York against a whisky company which printed his picture in its advertisements.

Accompanying the picture was a letter testifying that the writer had once been an emaciated weakling with a foot in the grave, but that half a dozen bottles of the "elixir" had made him strong.

Mr. Longman obtained an injunction from Supreme Court Justice Page against any further use of his picture. He testified at the time that the picture which had been printed was taken at Coney Island.

He said that it was removed from his room by a man to whom, he declared, had been promised six bottles of whisky if he obtained it for publication, together with a testimonial letter.

City Parks Make Bad Boys Good.

Miss Jane Addams, Hull House, Chicago, widely known settlement and betterment worker, was guest of honor at the City Club, in Milwaukee, Wis., at a luncheon in the Hotel Charlotte.

Representatives of woman's suffrage organizations in Milwaukee cheered when Miss Addams was introduced.

She described the system of small parks in connection with the settlement of Chicago.

"We are beginning to ask ourselves," she said, "as to the value of these centers from the social standpoint to the life of the city. We are beginning to feel that we have a message to take out to other cities in which similar undertakings are planned.

"First, it has been found that the number of arrests of boys between fourteen and eighteen has enormously decreased. This is, of course, a very negative result, but one worth recording.

"The Field settlements in Chicago have demonstrated their particular value in neighborhoods which are representative of various nationalities where the people have to be brought together.

"In a city composed of various nationalities we must bring this about, or that patriotism upon which the success of a city is based alone will not be fostered."

Miss Addams then discussed what she termed Bismarck's notion of homogeniety and patriotism, which she described as a belief that patriotism alone was insured by making the people conform to a single type.

"We cannot build up a nation in America on any such notions as that," she said.

United States as Sea Power Ranks Next to England.

The naval year book, issued under the auspices of the United States Senate committee on foreign relations, gives the United States second place among the naval powers, this government having thirty-seven battleships, one more than Germany. In armored cruisers Germany has fourteen and the United States twelve. The combined tonnage of battleships and cruisers shows the United States has 787,638 tons and Germany 768,241.

New York Butcher Pays $50 for Putting Lead Weights in Interior of Turkeys.

Two inspectors of the bureau of weights and measures, in New York, went into the butcher shop of Jacob Ginsburg and ordered a turkey. They were shown one that weighed nine pounds. It cost thirty cents per pound.

The inspector made him clean the turkey before their eyes, and in the middle of the stomach was a sixteen-ounce fishing sinker.

All the turkeys in the place were collected and turned inside out, and in each was found a lead sinker with weights varying from twelve to twenty-four ounces.

In the court of special sessions, the butcher was fined $50, which he paid.

No More Overcharges for Telephone Calls at Hotels.

By a vote of 30 to 15 the State senate, at Albany, N. Y., passed Senator Stilwell's bill, making it a misdemeanor to charge more for a telephone call from a hotel than from the station of the telephone company.

It was urged by Senator Ferris that the effect would be the removal from hotels of telephone booths, but Senator Stilwell interjected:

"We heard the same story when the eighty-cent gas bill became a law. It was said then the gas company would be put out of business."

Philadelphia Reporter Tells Tales of Clark Russell.

"I knew the late Clark Russell well," said a Philadelphia shipping reporter. "The unhappy man, racked with rheumatism, lay for many years on his back, as helpless as a newborn babe. That perhaps was how he came to leave $100,000. He couldn't spend any of his money, you see.

"Authors make less than is supposed. Clark Russell was once talking to me about authors' earnings. He said that publishers exaggerated these earnings so as to get more people to write for them.

"He said that the millionaire publisher, in order to draw authors on, painted the prosperity of the successful writer with the bold, crude exaggeration wherewith the preacher in the mariners' bethel painted the horrors of the bad place.

"A bethel preacher, he explained, was describing the bad place to a congregation of shellbacks.

"'Shipmates,' he said, 'you've seen the molten iron come running out of the furnace, haven't you? It comes out white hot, sizzling, and hissing, like some kind of snaky, horrible monster. Well, shipmates——'

"The preacher pointed his forefinger at the awed shellbacks.

"'Well, shipmates,' he said solemnly, 'they use that stuff for ice cream.'"

Bakers Required to Wrap Bread in Sanitary Paper.

Bakers all over the country are watching with interest the outcome of the plan proposed by the representative women's clubs of Washington, D. C., to force the wrapping in sanitary paper at the bakeries of all bread sold in that city.

It is planned to have the sanitary advantages of bread sold in that manner pointed out to the children of the city in the public schools. The children are in turn expected to secure the assistance of their parents in promoting the crusade.

Following the recent defeat of a bill providing for such wrapping of bread in the New Jersey assembly by a close vote, the plan is said to be attracting more than ordinary attention in the trade.

Two Inches of a Woman's Coat.

Women's coats will be thirty-two inches long next autumn and winter and not an inch longer or shorter, according to a decision by the Suit Designers' Association, at their convention in New York City.

The question whether the length should be thirty-two or thirty-four inches or both was debated for more than six hours, and the proceedings became so animated at times that the presiding officer pounded the head of the gavel flat with repeated appeals for order.

Remarkable Drama of Corsican Vendetta.

"The Three Masks," a lyric drama, by Isidore De Lara and Charles Mere, was produced at Marseilles, France, with considerable success.

It is the story of a Corsican vendetta, centering around a young man, Paolo, who is prevented by his parents from marrying the young girl, Viola, whom he has deceived.

Viola's three brothers, each masked, call upon Paolo's parents in carnival time and bring with them a pierrot, with whom they dance, and who, they say, is tipsy, but who in reality is the corpse of Paolo, whom they have assassinated.

The three masqueraders depart, leaving the pierrot behind them. When the father tries to awake the pierrot he withdraws his hand, dripping with blood, and discovers the body of his own son. The father then strives to kill Viola, but is prevented by his wife, who exclaims:

"She will one day have a child which will be another Paolo for you!"

The music is realistically descriptive of the drama. This opera was enthusiastically applauded by the Marseilles public. The drama will be produced in the United States as soon as possible.

Mules Have Gotta Quit Kickin' Their Drivers Aroun'.

The Missouri mules of the Consolidated Coal & Coke Company, at Dacona, Colo., have "gotta quit kickin'" their drivers around.

Jim Sonoff, an employee of the Consolidated Company, filed suit in the district court for $15,000 damages for injuries he alleges he received while engaged in driving one of the "critters."

The mule, according to Sonoff, was not trained to obey "gee" and "haw" and other verbal commands, as are most educated coal-mine mules. Sonoff avers his mule was a vicious, dangerous, unbroken, unsafe, and ill-tempered animal, notwithstanding "it was the duty of the company to furnish him with a safe, docile, trained animal."

Sonoff says that the mule ran away and threw the driver's car from the track. He declares that his spine was severely injured, his hip sprained, and that he received numerous other injuries.

$600 a Day for Thirty-three Days of Kindness.

Mrs. Ida B. Rosensteel, of Pittsburgh, Pa., a widow with six children, came into a fortune of $20,000, as a result of kindness shown to Mrs. Margaret McCausland, aged 85, during the last thirty-three days of her life.

Mrs. McCausland died, and her will gave the entire estate, consisting of $18,000 in real estate and $1,400 in cash, to Mrs. Rosensteel.

One day Mrs. McCausland, whom Mrs. Rosensteel knew but slightly, became ill. The aged woman lived alone, having no relatives and apparently no friends. For thirty-three days Mrs. Rosensteel cared for her, preparing meals and keeping the house.

"Maine" Memorial Monument in Havana.

The Cuban secretary of public works, at Havana, has drawn up plans for a monument in Havana in memory of the *Maine* and her crew.

President Gomez will send a message to the Cuban Congress urging an appropriation for the purpose.

Admiral Wainwright Says Japan Might Wipe Us from the Seas.

"If the naval policy adopted by the Democratic caucus is continued, Japan or any other big nation will be able to wipe us from the seas," said Rear Admiral Richard Wainwright, in a statement given in Washington to the Hearst newspapers.

"It is to be regretted that the evident purpose of the House is to decrease the naval program.

"Even if Congress gave us two battleships a year we would in nineteen-sixteen have only twenty battleships in the first line and twenty in the second line.

"Germany has a much greater program for naval construction than two ships a year. In nineteen-sixteen we will be immeasurably distanced by that nation.

"The true policy of this nation ought to be that our navy shall be second only to that of Great Britain.

"In order to attain that position which rightfully belongs to us, our program should be four battleships of the first class every year.

"I am a member of the general naval board, and I have steadily voted for four battleships a year.

"The power that controls us, however, ordered the board to reduce the number of ships recommended to two, in the hope that we might be given that number. Now even that hope is blasted, and nothing is more certain than that we will rapidly drop back from second to a very subordinate place, if the present legislative policy of so-called economy is pursued."

Pure Penny Candies for School Children.

"The investigation started by the division of child hygiene of the Boston, Mass., city government relating to the ingredients and processes involved in making various forms of penny candies sold in large quantities to school children is," says the *Union*, of Springfield, Mass., "worthy of commendation.

"The craving of children for sweets is a perfectly normal and healthy one, and is so well understood that there is usually some place near every public-school building were low-priced candies are sold. It is a sight to see the youngsters flock in and exchange their pennies for these confections.

"The penny goods come within the means of almost every child, and no obstacle should be imposed to the gratification of their wants. It is important, however, that poisonous and deleterious substances should not be purveyed in those candies.

"The use of sulphites, saccharin, and germ-laden glue in the making of cheap candy has been exposed and fought with good effect in a number of places.

"This work should go on until these and similar abuses have been banished from the trade. Harmless adulterants ought not to be used in candy, and especially is it to be condemned in those forms of candy which especially appeal to the eye and the limited means of a child.

"There is sufficient profit in the penny candies so that the manufacturers can afford to bar out everything that is injurious, and they should be forced, without exception, to conform to that requirement."

New Lands Opened to Check Emigration.

In the hope of checking emigration of American farmers to the Canadian Northwest, important amendments to liberalize the public-land laws were favorably reported by Senator Smoot from the public lands committee of the United States Senate, at Washington, D. C.

The enforced term of residence on a homestead would be reduced from five years to three, and a homesteader would be permitted to absent himself from his claim six months every year.

Senator Borah and others who stand for liberalizing the laws have declared in the Senate that a very desirable class of American citizens were being driven to Canada at the rate of 100,000 a year by the stringent land laws.

More than 3,800,000 acres of public lands, now withheld from settlement because of their supposed oil deposits, would be available for agricultural entry under a bill favorably reported by the Senate committee on public lands. It would permit surface entries, reserving oil rights to the government.

Popular Volume of Humorous College Tales.

George Fitch's book of humorous college tales "At Good Old Siwash," went into a fourth printing, and is probably entitled to the distinction of the most popular volume of humorous fiction of the present time. In response to imperative demands Mr. Fitch is now at work revising his mirth-provoking motor-boat stories for book publication some time in the spring.

Baseball Player Signs on His Whole Family.

For the first time in the history of the diamond, a baseball club insisted on signing an entire family.

The contract of Pitcher Harry Gardner, of the Pirates, at Pittsburgh, was not passed over to the coast player for his signature this season until he agreed that in case he signed it he would bring to Pittsburgh with him his wife and their baby.

President Dreyfus, of the Pirates, insisted on this, for the reason that last season the young fellow suffered so from homesickness that he failed to show what the club management believes is in him.

New York Owes More Money Than National Government.

According to official figures submitted to Mayor Gaynor by the finance department, New York City's total debt at the beginning of 1912 was $1,037,811,718, or approximately $20,000,000 more than the public debt of the United States.

During 1911 the funded debt increased $71,432,485, of which $44,200,000 represents bond issues for rapid-transit work and the new water-supply system.

Public-school Children Taught How to Use Eyes.

"Eastern cities are beginning to make a trial of a Western method of teaching public-school children to use their eyes correctly. The method is founded," says the Boston *Advertiser,* "upon the theory that eye strain of various kinds comes largely from improper use of the eyes, that is often due to a miscalculation of distances and a failure to accommodate the eyes to the distances which a particular situation requires.

"It has been found that many pupils formerly thought stupid or obstinate, are merely suffering from misuse of the organs of vision. It is reported that educators are much interested in the new method."

Moving-Pictures of New York Made from Aeroplane.

The moving pictures of New York harbor and the East River, made by Frank T. Coffyn, were shown at the Aëro Club of America, at the clubhouse, New York. The result of nine attempts to take photographs along the lower water front resulted in about eight hundred feet of pictures of Ellis, Bedlow's, Governor's, and Manhattan Islands and the Brooklyn and Manhattan Bridges.

All the pictures were made from an altitude of approximately one thousand feet. A remarkable feature of the films is that the pictures taken when Mr. Coffyn's machine was making nearly eighty miles an hour in a stiff wind, were the clearest of all.

They show every detail of Governor's Island, including Castle Williams, where the prisoners' clothing is shown on a rail around the inside wall. In pictures of the Third and Sixth Avenue elevated roads the trains are shown in motion, while moving trolley cars and trucks are very clearly seen in the pictures of the bridges.

Idaho Club Woman Captures Horse Thieves.

Mrs. Rachel Winter, of Twin Falls, Idaho, has gone through all such ordinary Western experiences as taking horseback trips lasting for days, going on her honeymoon in a freight wagon, and living in an isolated camp for months, but she is perhaps the only woman in the United States who wears a gold medal presented to her for assisting in the capture of horse thieves.

Essentially womanly, no one would imagine, to look at Mrs Winter when she is attending a meeting of the Century Club, that she could the next minute don a cowgirl's costume and start off on a long and lonely bareback ride, or that she could hold the ranch alone, with a broken arm and with 200 head of cattle to feed, for three weeks, and yet these are only a few of her accomplishments.

Mrs. Winter is a New York girl by birth and a graduate of the Oneonta Normal School. She was on her way to California four years ago with her sick father when she met Mr. Winter, who had the same destination in view. They fell in love and a short time later they were married.

Mrs. Winter's wedding trip was taken in a four-horse freight wagon bound for her husband's ranch in Nevada.

Kate Douglas Wiggin Tells of Meeting Dickens.

Houghton Mifflin Company announce the publication of "A Child's Journey With Dickens," by Kate Douglas Wiggin, the well-known American novelist and dramatist, author of "Rebecca at the Farm." This interesting contribution to the literature of the Dickens centenary was brought out by the dinner recently given in New York, at which Mrs. Wiggin was one of the most applauded speakers.

In her inimitable way she told of a meeting with Charles Dickens when she was a slip of a girl just about as old as her own "Rebecca."

Heartsick at not having been taken to hear Dickens read at Portland, Me., she found herself the next day on the same train with this man who had written the books that were part of her very existence.

More wonderful still, she soon found herself in the same seat with the great author, and then ensued the never-to-be-forgotten conversation which is set down at length in this book.

Suffragettes Not Militant—Merely Insistent.

Suffragists invaded the capitol in Washington in force and presented their arguments to legislators for an amendment to the constitution to enfranchise women. Hearings were given by a joint committee of the woman's suffrage and judiciary committees in the Senate and by the judiciary committee of the House. The committee rooms were crowded by women from various cities.

Doctor Anna Shaw marshaled the suffragist forces at the Senate hearing. Mrs. Laidlaw assured seven senators that the women present were not militant, but only "insistent and persistent."

Probably the most determined speaker was Miss Leonora O'Reilly, of New York, representing the wage earners.

Before the House judiciary committee, Miss Jane Addams, of Hull House, Chicago, argued that a million women would vote for president in the coming election; that a half million more have votes in municipal elections, and that woman should have a voice in the government. She said that the care of the child and its protection was rapidly becoming more a matter of government control, and that woman, the mother, should have a part in it.

Pups Enrolled as Students at Kansas University.

Three setter pups were enrolled as students at the University of Kansas, at Lawrence, Kan. They took their place in a class with a Maltese cat and a bulldog belonging to Earl Thorpe, professor of journalism at the university.

This novel class will be under the tutorage of Professor B. C. Dockeray, who will endeavor to prove whether the lower animals can learn and think.

"We will conduct experiments covering several weeks," Professor Dockeray said, "and hope to determine positively if they have ideas and discrimination."

American Ambassador in London Didn't Say It.

An interview published in New York quoting Whitelaw Reid, United States ambassador in London, as comparing present conditions in England with those of France before the revolution was dragged into the limelight in the House of Commons in London, by Sir Henry James Dalziel, member of Parliament.

Sir Henry was curious as to the authenticity of the statement, and asked Sir Edward Grey to catechise the American ambassador on the subject.

Edwin Samuel Montagu, parliamentary under secretary of state for India, on behalf of Sir Edward Grey, foreign secretary, declared that the latter was sure that the report was not true. He had not heard of it until Sir Henry Dalziel sent a copy of it to him. Whitelaw Reid later denied absolutely that he had made any statement of the kind used, and the king and queen invited the ambassador to luncheon as a hint to the country that the gossip was to cease.

Washington Buttons Sold to Build Memorial.

Mrs. Henry F. Dimock, of New York, went to Washington for the purpose of urging upon Congress the need of giving to the George Washington Memorial Association the plot in Washington formerly occupied by the Pennsylvania Railroad Station. The association plans to erect on the plot a building costing $2,000,000, for which $500,000 has been subscribed.

Senator Elihu Root introduced a bill providing for the use of the land, and the Senate committee on buildings and grounds heard the New York woman upon her application.

A large part of the money will be obtained by ten-cent subscriptions from school children, who will get Washington buttons to show their interest in the matter.

Vice President Sherman Wants Husbands to Treat Wives as Equals.

"There would be fewer divorces," said Vice President Sherman at a banquet in New York, "if men treated their wives with absolute equality. There are too many husbands of Cholmondeley's stamp.

"As Cholmondeley blew the froth from a large glass of beer one evening, a friend said to him:

"'I hear you've had your pay raised, Cholmondeley.'

"'Yes, but it did me no good,' and Cholmondeley drained his glass and pushed it to the bartender for refilling.

"'Did you no good? Why not?'

"'I talked in my sleep,' Cholmondeley remarked, 'and my wife got on to it.'"

Institution for Free Treatment of Tuberculosis Victims.

One of the largest institutions in the country for the treatment of tuberculosis cases is being planned for Denver, Colo., by a group of prominent business and professional men. Articles of incorporation were filed with the secretary of state in Denver under the name of the Christian Sanatorium Association.

It is planned to purchase a tract of land near Denver and erect a huge sanitarium for men and women patients.

Patients from all parts of the United States are to be admitted free. Doctor Henry Keyes, a Harvard graduate, who lately took up his residence in Denver, originated the idea.

Doctor Keyes declared that Colorado's climate is unequaled for sanitarium purposes.

England Ready for Hostilities.

The British war office, where red tape and muddling methods have reigned supreme, has turned over a new leaf, according to a declaration made in the House of Commons, in London, by Colonel Seely, under secretary for war, and transmitted to the New York *Times.*

When challenged regarding the preparedness of Great Britain for war, Colonel Seely held up for the inspection of the House a sealed envelope which, he said, contained information as to how Great Britain could in a few days dispatch from her shores 150,000 men with ammunition and stores for three months.

It was an answer to an indictment by Leopold Amery, historian of the Boer War, who declared that the country was in pretty much the same condition as at the commencement of that war. Colonel Seely, according to the New York *Times,* said that if that were believed it would have a grave reaction on Great Britain's position in the world. He raised in his hand a sealed foolscap envelope, so that all the House might see, and said:

"I hold here an envelope, which I have addressed to the honorable member, marked 'secret' (any member can have a similar communication if he will regard it as secret), from which it will be seen that, suppose we wanted to send reënforcements to Natal to-morrow without withdrawing one single man from our eastern garrison, we could send within a very few days, if the transports were ready, 150,000 men, fully equipped with ammunition and stores. If that word were given to-day, within a few days 150,000 men could be dispatched with all their ammunition, stores, and reënforcements for three months.

"This marks the most extraordinary advance in the whole military history of this country."

Bookkeeping Taught in School is Unknown in Business World.

A Carthage, N. Y., school principal finds fault with the regents' restrictions in the teaching of bookkeeping in schools, which is a system which no business uses, and he thinks it ought to be adapted to business use. Quite right, agrees the *Times,* of Watertown, N. Y.

The regents' department doesn't know much about business or anything else, except the running of an arbitrary educational machine, which contributes nothing to education, but takes away the time for educational acquirement.

Perhaps a good many men now in business can recollect a school certificate, stored away somewhere, certifying to the fact that they knew all about bookkeeping, and also may recollect that when they had occasion to keep books, they found they had to forget all their school bookkeeping and learn how to do it in the practical way.

Every business has its own system, adapted to its own needs. Indeed, bookkeeping, as taught in the schools, has all gone out of use.

Wellesley Maids Raising Money by the Mile.

Wellesley College girls, at Wellesley, Mass., raised $60 in one day, as part of the fund for a new alumnæ building. They started their race one morning for a "mile of pennies" and 500 strips were turned in at night. Each strip contains twelve cents.

Miss Edna Salote, a junior from Philadelphia and chairman of the students' alumnæ building committee, beat the starter's gun by one strip. All the stores in Wellesley now keep a big supply of one-cent pieces, for the students demand them when change is coming.

Many Army Posts to be Abandoned.

Acting upon a report by the general staff, Secretary of War Stimson, at Washington, D. C., decided that no less than sixteen, and probably eighteen army posts should at once be abandoned, "in order to put an end to the extravagance and inefficiency resulting from improper distribution of the mobile army."

The posts condemned include Fort Apache, Arizona; Fort Jay, New York; Madison Barracks, New York; Fort Niagara, New York; Fort Ontario, New York, and Fort Wayne, Michigan.

Of Fort Apache, it is said a possibility of Indian trouble near this post still exists and that Fort Jay might be retained as headquarters of the Eastern division and as the site of the Eastern military prison.

There is another formidable list of posts from which for practically similar reasons the garrisons will ultimately be withdrawn to such concentration centers as Congress may authorize. These posts include Fort Ethan Allen, Vermont; Plattsburg Barracks, New York, and D. A. Russell, Wyoming. The last-named post is shown to have cost to date $4,925,486.

Secretary Stimson's report is made in answer to a House of Representatives resolution by Representative Bulkley, of Ohio.

The principal object of the military experts is to dispose of the present small army with distinct reference to its mission in case of war. This first involves adequate forces for foreign garrisons, which cannot be reënforced from the United States after the outbreak of hostilities. With the remainder of the army a mobile force is to be organized and distributed among about eight great strategical points in the United States instead of scattered in forty-nine posts, as now.

By the concentration of the army in eight posts, it is explained that the annual cost of maintenance of the army would be reduced by about $5,500,000 a year.

The following posts are said to be so located as to permit of their being retained as strategic concentration points:

Fort McPherson, Atlanta, Ga.; Fort Sam Huston, Texas; Fort Lawton, near Seattle, Wash., and Vancouver Barracks, Washington, near Portland, and the Presidos of San Francisco and Monterey, California, one or both of which may be included in the California strategic group.

Furthermore, probably one only of the following posts should be retained: Fort Benjamin Harrison, Ohio; Columbus Barracks, Ohio; Fort Sheridan, Illinois; Des Moines, Iowa; Crook, Nebraska; Leavenworth, Kansas; Riley, Kansas; Snelling, Minnesota, and Jefferson Barracks, Missouri.

Four posts recommended for retention are:

Fort Sill, Oklahoma; Forts Bliss, Texas, and Huochuca, Arizona, and Fort Myer, Virginia.

Korea to be the Scene of Two Great Wars.

Study of conditions in the Orient convinced Professor Starr, of the University of Chicago, that Korea will be the battleground for two great wars, one between Russia and Japan, and the other between Japan and China, within the next few years.

Doctor Starr declared that the Russian government, filled with rage and humiliation over its defeat by Japan, was biding its time and making preparations to give a better account of itself in the next struggle. Japan, by seizing Korea and developing and fortifying the country, was making the best possible preparation for the struggle.

Japanese Professor Studying Census Taking.

It appears that the Japanese are going to take their next census according to European methods.

For this purpose a Japanese professor from the University of Tokio visited Rome, Italy, with a view to studying the taking of the Italian census. He had been in Berlin and Vienna with a similar object. The Japanese census is to be taken on more exact lines than has ever been attempted on previous occasions.

Boy Invents Device that Stops Eavesdropping on Phone.

Philip Lavery, twenty years old, a mill worker in the town of Webster, Mass., got $17,000 for his invention to prevent a third person from overhearing a conversation over the telephone.

The device consists of a small attachment that fits into each instrument. It is constructed of mica and steel.

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